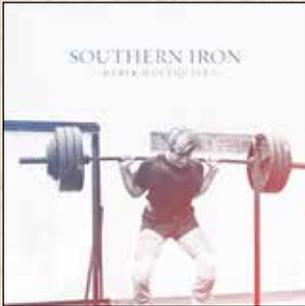




HOMEGROWN



DERIK HULQUIST SOUTHERN IRON

CARNIVAL RECORDING CO.

On his new album *Southern Iron*, **Derik Hultquist** offers rich portraits of reflection, anticipation, and stillness via lush rock-and-roll that suggest waiting isn't a mere segue: it's living. Born in Knoxville and living in Nashville, **Hultquist** wasn't interested in joining the storied ranks of staff writers who create hits for the city's mainstream country music machine, but he did want to develop the sounds and lyrics that had always busied his mind. After releasing a well-regarded EP and touring with the likes of Sturgil Simpson, **Hultquist** has made one hell of a statement with *Southern Iron*, which flirts with psychedelic and roots rock without committing, carving out its own robust pop soundscape. **Hultquist** wrote all but one of the album's songs alone, and the result captures a songwriter wholly comfortable with his calling. Texturally rich and unflinchingly honest, and always up for a rousing chorus, *Southern Iron* is another win for the New Nashville.



FRANKIE LEE AMERICAN DREAMER

LOOSE MUSIC

Born on the banks of the Mississippi river, **Frankie Lee's** family later moved to Minneapolis. Following the death of his father in a motorcycle accident when he was 12, **Frankie** immersed himself in the city's music scene, appearing onstage with local heroes like Slim Dunlap (The Replacements) at the impressionable age of 14. At the age of 20 **Lee** dropped out of college, re-invested his soccer scholarship funds in a Volvo Station wagon and spent a couple of years driving. He met Merle in Nashville, hung out with Townes' kid in Austin, got hooked on methamphetamines, kicked, worked on a hog farm, and eventually found a friend in famed engineer Patrick McCarthy (R.E.M., Luna) who helped him get the music out of his head and stuck in yours. **Lee's** story seems a little *too good to be true...* but, then again, so are these songs, which sound like The War on Drugs gone Nashville.



BANTA DARK CHARMS

EONE MUSIC

Once, when musician Sharaya Mikael was traveling through Colorado, she heard a story about a gold miner who dug on his land for years and years. Finally, defeated, he sold the land to a man who dug only three feet before striking it rich. It's a lesson she's held with her ever since: You never know how close you are to something. It's been true for Mikael's band **Banta**, who have continued to find themselves on the cusp of success, knowing that perseverance will always carry them forward. The group, which formed in September of 2013 after Mikael moved to Los Angeles from Nashville, knows that a career doesn't develop overnight and they're willing to put in the time. **Banta's Dark Charms** album stitches together 12 songs, each unveiling its own narrative. More Fleetwood Mac than, say, the Pistol Annies, *Dark Charms* is more sun-kissed than its title suggests, but the charm remains.



JON PARDI CALIFORNIA SUNRISE

CAPITOL NASHVILLE

California native **Jon Pardi** is often commended for sticking to his traditional country roots. "I always want to have the traditional country soul while meeting the new standards of country music," explains the country singer. "As with traditional country music, much of the appeal comes from a compelling narrative." **Pardi** adds, "I love having those lyrics that at first make you think it's about one thing, but it's really about something so much more." *California Sunrise* is the follow-up to **Pardi's** celebrated debut album, *Write You A Song*, featuring his Top 10 hit, "Up All Night." In the studio, **Pardi** captured a palpable live energy on *California Sunrise* by recording each song with a full band. "We used seven guys - one band," says **Pardi**. "And there's something special about that." But those looking for gritty authenticity should look elsewhere - *California Sunrise* is a pop album through and through.



THE EARLS OF LEICESTER RATTLE & ROAR

ROUNDER

The Earls of Leicester have discovered a kind of magic that, when harnessed, allows moments once relegated to memories to roar back to life. Old sounds rattle loose chains of space and time that have kept us from forgotten joys and who we once were. Suddenly, as we listen to and watch **The Earls** pick, saw, and croon, instead of contemplating once upon a time, we are living it. With their second album *Rattle & Roar*, **The Earls** have conjured up a fresh batch of Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs songs, delivered with their Grammy-winning signature blend of homage, virtuosity, and perspective. To capture the feel of a live show, *Rattle & Roar* was recorded in one room, with all of the band members around mics, no separation between them. The result pulses with impish joy, uniquely showcasing artists at the top of their game. The inimitable **Jerry Douglas** served as producer.

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