



CHRIS STAPLETON
FROM A ROOM: VOLUME 2
 MERCURY NASHVILLE

Chris Stapleton's *From A Room: Volume 2* takes its name from Nashville's historic RCA Studio A (the capital "A" in *From A Room*) where it was recorded with Grammy Award-winning producer – the ubiquitous force behind the Nashville's most daring artists – Dave Cobb. Along with Stapleton on vocals and guitar and Cobb on acoustic guitar, the album features Morgane Stapleton on harmony vocals as well as longtime band-members J.T. Cure on bass and Derek Mixon on drums. In addition to seven songs co-written by Stapleton, the album features versions of Kevin Welch's "Millionaire" and the Homer Banks/Lester Snell-penned song made famous by Pops Staples, "Friendship." *Volume 2* follows the release of *From A Room: Volume 1*, which debuted earlier this year at #1 on the Billboard Country Albums chart, #2 on the Billboard Top 200 chart and, with its RIAA Gold certification, remains the #1 best-selling country album of 2017. Stapleton's 2015 double platinum, Grammy-winning solo debut, *Traveller*, is still the #2 best-selling country album of the year. Your move, "bro-country."



CHEAP TRICK
CHRISTMAS CHRISTMAS
 BIG MACHINE

Since the 70s, Rock and Roll Hall of Famers, **Cheap Trick**, have been blending elements of pop, punk and even metal in a way that is instantly catchy and recognizable. With timeless classics such as "I Want You to Want Me," "Surrender," and the late 80s lighter-waving favorite, "The Flame," **Cheap Trick** are a musical institution who continue to find new fans year after year. Now, forty-odd years into their unlikely career, **Cheap Trick** have achieved yet another first: They recorded a holiday record, *Christmas Christmas*. Arriving mere months after their critically-acclaimed eighteenth studio album, *We're All Alright!*, **Cheap Trick** co-produced the holiday collection alongside their longtime collaborator, Grammy Award winner Julian Raymond (Glen Campbell, Fastball). With *Christmas Christmas*, **Cheap Trick** delivers a sleigh full of rock and roll Christmas classics and festive favorites by Wizzard, Slade, Chuck Berry, The Ramones and The Kinks, as well as newly penned offerings like the joyous lead track "Merry Christmas Darlings."



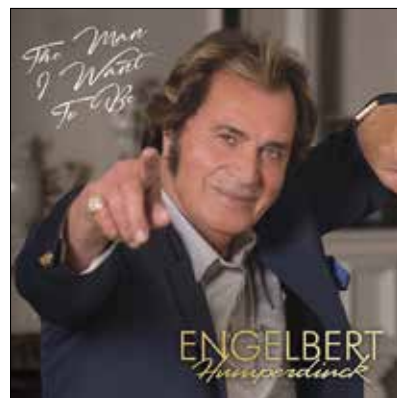
N.E.R.D.
NO ONE EVER REALLY DIES
 COLUMBIA

N.E.R.D. is the weird-ass hip hop lunacy perpetuated by Pharrell Williams, his Neptunes partner Chad Hugo, and elusive emcee Shay Haley. **N.E.R.D.** was created to give these three friends a chance to stretch their oddest muscles in the studio – exploring their limits of their imagination for their own amusement – a fun exercise considering how much classic music The Neptunes have created for other artists. Their long-awaited new album, *No One Ever Really Dies*, is the trio's first album since 2010's *Nothing*, has introduced itself via the gloriously gonzo "Lemon" – an elastic, ridiculous slab of strange funk that features some amazing rapping courtesy of **Rihanna**, and a structure that gives De La Soul a run for their money. RiRi isn't the only one wanting to make noise with **N.E.R.D.** – OutKast legend **André 3000**, **Ed Sheeran**, **Future**, and **Gucci Mane** all make their presence felt, while the one-and-only **Kendrick Lamar** brings the heat twice.



ROBERT PLANT
CARRY FIRE
 NONESUCH

Carry Fire, **Robert Plant's** eleventh solo album and first full-length since 2014's acclaimed *Lullaby* and *The Ceaseless Roar*. As with *Lullaby*, **Plant** is accompanied by **The Sensational Space Shifters**. **Plant** and the band spent two years on the road together supporting *Lullaby*, and their unique sound and vision ultimately evolved into something even more powerful. That chemistry courses through the songs on **Carry Fire**. "I feel the lure and incentive to create new work," he notes. "I must mix old with new. Consequently, the whole impetus of the band has moved on its axis somewhat, the new sound and different space giving way to exciting and dramatic landscapes of mood, melody and instrumentation." **Plant** and the Space Shifters are also joined on **Carry Fire** by a number of special guests. Chrissie Hynde joins **Plant** on the duet "Bluebirds Over the Mountain" (written by rockabilly legend Ersel Hickey and later recorded by both Richie Valens and The Beach Boys). Albanian cellist Redi Hasa performs on three tracks, as does the celebrated Seth Lakeman on viola and fiddle. The album was produced by **Plant**, who found the perfect balance of atmosphere and groove. In all, **Carry Fire** is a spellbinding and beautiful record.



ENGERLBERT HUMPERDINCK
THE MAN I WANT TO BE
 MRI

Celebrating his 50th year in showbiz, **Engelbert Humperdinck** is back with his first album of brand-new material in years with *The Man I Want to Be*. There are new songs by Richard Marx, Jon Allen (including the title track), Richard Scott, Steve Mac, Les Reed and **Engelbert's** daughter Louise Dorsey. There's also a few unexpected covers in Bruno Mars' "Just the Way You Are" and Ed Sheeran's "Photograph," plus three classic songs recently introduced in his stage show: Willie Nelson's "Crazy," Eddy Arnold's "Welcome to my World" and the NY classic "On Broadway" – all of which have been remade in **Humperdinck's** image. *The Man I Want to Be* finds **Engelbert** in a reflective and introspective mood. Most of the new songs were written drawing on some of his life experiences in a meaningful way that is relevant to various chapters of his life, including the health situation of his wife Patricia who is suffering from advanced Alzheimer's. That song, "I'm Glad I Danced With You." Was written by **Humperdinck's** daughter, Louise, and performed as a duet with his granddaughter, Olivia, is one of 2017's most stirring love songs. Fingers crossed he still finds his way onto the next Gorillaz record...



NEIL YOUNG + PROMISE OF THE REAL
THE VISITOR
 WARNER BROS

Neil Young + Promise Of The Real pair up once again for the new studio album *The Visitor*. When **Young** entered Shangri La Studio with **Promise Of The Real** in the Fall of 2017, there were a lot of images and feelings careening around his soul. The country was heading in a direction **Young** had never seen... But something different was happening, and it had gotten inside his music. "I'm a Canadian by the way and I love the USA," he sings on the first song "Already Great." The ethos of *The Visitor* can be summed up in the refrain of "Already Great" where **Young** insists, "Already great, you're already great. You're the promise land, the helping hand. No wall. No hate. No fascist USA. Whose Street? Our Street." With the unlimited ability of **Promise of the Real**, featuring Lukas and Michah Nelson (Willie's son) along with Corey McCormick, Anthony Logerfo and Tato Melgar, the passionate power of their playing pushes the songs to maximum expression. There are very few rock bands now who can go to as many places as this outfit and always deliver their own distinct identity. And I know it sounds blasphemous, but this band is in **Crazy Horse** territory – freewheeling, loud, unpredictable, and delivering the goods with brute joy. Dig!



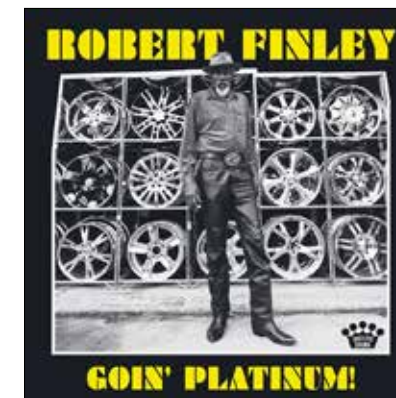
JASON ISBELL
THE NASHVILLE SOUND
 SOUTHEASTERN RECORDS

Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit's new album, *The Nashville Sound*, will light a fire under your ass. It's a challenge; a gauntlet in song: Let's claim ownership of our biases ("White Man's World"). Let's embrace and celebrate the uncomfortable idea that the force that activates both life and love is death (the instant-classic "If We Were Vampires"). Let's consciously choose light over darkness ("Hope the High Road"). And for God's sake, if you are feeling anxious, alone, disenfranchised, depressed, mad as hell, or scared as shit, find something that gasses you up and work at it ("Something to Love"). It's also worth noting that, for the first time since 2011's *Here We Rest*, **Isbell's** band, the **400 Unit**, gets title billing. "Even when I was writing, I could always hear the band's stamp on the finished product," **Jason** says. "These songs needed more collaboration on the arrangements to make them work, and I felt like the band deserved it after the way they played." Given super-producer Dave Cobb's strict insistence on cutting songs live with no demos or rehearsals, you can easily imagine (or know if you were lucky enough to snag that recent Record Store Day piece) how these brilliantly raw performances will translate to the stage. You need this.



LUKE BRYAN
WHAT MAKES YOU COUNTRY
 CAPITOL NASHVILLE

Bro Country titan, **Luke Bryan**, loves to sing about the good times, but he's also had his share of heavy losses – stuff that would form the basis of the saddest of country songs. This brings us to the title of **Bryan's** brand new album, *What Makes You Country* – which, in a way, a record about going back to your roots, holding on to what's most important... But not being afraid to have some fun along the way. Produced by Jeff Stevens and Jody Stevens, *What Makes You Country* features 15 songs, seven of which were co-written by **Luke**, including the title track. The album's lead single, "Light It Up," is currently No. 11 on Billboard's Country Airplay chart after just six weeks. "My favorite part of making a new album is getting to collaborate with the songwriting community in this town," said **Luke** about his Nashville community. "It is important to me to continue to push myself to grow on all levels and I feel like we did that on this project. Making and performing music never gets old and I can honestly say I am having the time of my life. I will be forever grateful to every fan who sings along each night."



ROBERT FINLEY
GOIN' PLATINUM!
 NONESUCH

When you've been making music for as long as **Robert Finley** has, you learn to trust your gut, you learn to trust your ear, and most of all, you learn to trust your company. Fortunately for us, here in 2017 **Mr. Finley** has all three in spades. The singer lives in the tiny, forgotten town of Bernice, Louisiana, but in his younger days his music took him all over the world. Following his rambling military service (he played in the band), he learned the trade of carpentry and settled back home in the States. He leaped on his gospel and blues songs for a hobby rather than career, and mostly confined his artistry to the streets of the South. But now, **Finley's** music is once again primed to reach doors and shores at home and abroad, as his new LP *Goin' Platinum!* is set to be released through Black Keys singer / guitarist **Dan Auerbach's** new label, Easy Eye Sound. The album captures a singer at his prime, surrounded by all-time-great session musicians with skill to match his singular voice, including horns players from **Preservation Hall**, and legendary guitarist **Duane Eddy**. *Goin' Platinum!* was co-written and produced by Dan Auerbach and also features writing credits by legendary songwriters **John Prine**, **Nick Lowe**, and **Pat McLaughlin**.





UNDER THE RADAR

DEC 2017 • JAN 2018



HIPPO CAMPUS LANDMARK GRAND JURY

From the resplendent "Way It Goes," a guitar led gallop about the Instagram-filtered church of cool, to the propulsive "Boyish," a horn-kissed rumination on children of divorce, *landmark* – the debut album from Minneapolis' *Hippo Campus* – is shot through with a woozy dissonance between precocious wisdom and old-as-time coming of age stories. The result is a messy, brave, and earnest whole – not to mention, a tectonic shift forward for a young band still discovering itself. After a 10-month stretch of work informed by their surprising ascent (via a couple of fantastic EPs), *Hippo Campus*' first full-length showcases not only their trademark ear for ringing melodies and impeccably constructed pop frameworks, but a desire to dig deeper—both into their talent and in their selves—for inspiration. *landmark* is rife with up-close lyrics that reflect the struggles of crash-landing into an always-on world. "It's our most honest release yet, but it didn't start that way at all," says guitarist / vocalist Jake Luppen. "There are two halves to the record—the first half represents our first stage of writing, where we're showing off our ironic side and criticizing the culture of social media, and the youth culture that we're a huge part of now." Indeed, *landmark* invites introspection and close listening.



SOUNDTRACK THE GREATEST SHOWMAN ON EARTH ATLANTIC

The Greatest Showman is a bold and original musical that celebrates the birth of show business and the sense of wonder we feel when dreams come to life. The movie is inspired by the imagination of P.T. Barnum and revolves around a visionary who rose from nothing to create a spectacle that became a worldwide sensation. The soundtrack features the original songs from the movie composed by Academy Award winners **Benj Pasek & Justin Paul** – the duo behind *La La Land* – and performed by the movie's cast. This includes a bit where Hugh Jackman raps, but we're not going to tell you when it happens – that would spoil the fun – which is just one of many instances of the *The Greatest Showman* taking an anachronistic approach to the music. Says Justin Paul: "[director Gracey] wanted the music to be contemporary. We thought that was really bizarre and intriguing, and that was one of the reasons that we really perked up. It was this period tale, but he said, 'The choreography's going to be contemporary, the music wants to be contemporary.'" *The Greatest Showman* is directed by **Michael Gracey** and stars **Hugh Jackman, Zac Efron, Michelle Williams, Rebecca Ferguson, and Zendaya**. *The Greatest Showman* will be released in theaters on Christmas Day.



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BJÖRK UTOPIA ONE LITTLE INDIA

Björk returns with her ninth studio effort *Utopia* – the result of a collaborative writing process with Venezuelan producer **Arca** (aka Alejandro Ghers), who co-produced most of the songs on *Vulnicura*. Where *Vulnicura* was a break-up record that was both beautiful and painful in equal measure, *Utopia* celebrates her reemergence on the other side of heartache. Says **Björk**: "The last album, we sort of call it 'hell' – it was like divorce. So we are doing paradise now. *Utopia*. *Vulnicura* was about a very personal loss, and I think this new album is about a love that's even greater. It's about rediscovering love – but in a spiritual way..." Transcendent lead single "The Gate" serves as a fitting introduction to a record about **Björk's** romantic renaissance – she's even jokingly called it her "Tinder album." Says *Pitchfork*: "Where *Vulnicura* painted black lakes, barren landscapes, and frozen rooms, *Utopia* seeks out a lush island where love is abundant and given without condition or hesitation." The eye-catching cover art was designed by artist Jesse Kanda with creative direction from **Björk** and her longtime collaborator James Merry.



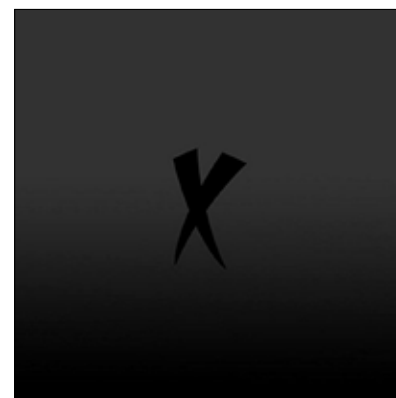
MO TROPER EXPOSURE & RESPONSE GOOD CHEER RECORDS

"The music business is a cruel and shallow money trench, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free, and good men die like dogs. There's also a negative side." So said Hunter S. Thompson [allegedly]. It sounds like **Mo Tropa** took these words to heart. A talented songsmith with a powerful voice that reminds one of a Power Pop John Darnielle (The Mountain Goats), **Troper** uses his new album, *Exposure and Response*, to skewer the business that would seek to commodify his generous natural gifts without any concern for the blood, sweat, and tears that gives art a capital "A." So it's rather brilliant that **Troper** would use Power Pop – a genre that is often more concerned with aping of classic songwriters and styles rather than advance anything original – to satirize the current music landscape, which, even on the indie level, is more surface / p.r. oriented than ever. The bile is never concealed in **Troper's** lyrics – which, given their balance to *Exposure and Response's* brilliant arrangements [which come courtesy of another Power Pop hero, **Roger Manning of Jellyfish**] – could earn him a reputation as the Elvis Costello of the Bandcamp set. That he'll sometimes make his point in under a minute gives him Bob Pollard-level cool. He may hate the game, but damn does he sound amazing playing it. You need this.



CINDY WILSON CHANGE KILL ROCK STARS

After 40 years as one-third of the **B-52s**, **Cindy "Tin Roof Rusted" Wilson** steps out on her own with *Change*. A collaboration between **Wilson** and friends and Athens, GA musician Ryan Monahan, *Change* marks a significant departure from **Wilson's** main gig. *Change* began for **Wilson** nearly a decade ago upon her part-time return to her hometown of Athens, GA. She first encountered local musician Monahan when his Beatles tribute band played her son's birthday party. The veteran vocalist and talented young musician began teaming up for gigs, beginning with R.E.M.'s star-studded 30th anniversary event. "Ryan and drummer Lemuel Hayes and I put together a few songs and it was fantastic," **Wilson** says. "That started our own musical relationship." With echoes of Air, Björk, Tame Impala, and Gary Numan, the collective refers to its infectious brand of new-wave electro-pop as "Turbo Chill." Rather than employ "rock voice" on *Change*, **Wilson** gets to experiment with more emotional, subtle vocalizations, crooning, and whispering over swirls of subtle psychedelia, Quincy Jones-era strings, and pulsing synths. The result is a subtle, groovy delight (with some fascinating detours) that will surprise fans old and new.



NXWORRIES YES LAWD! REMIXES STONES THROW

YES LAWD! As tempting as it may be to just let that exclamation suffice as your sole introduction to **NxWorries**, we should go a little deeper. The men at the heart of this LP – soul stylist **Anderson .Paak** and loop beast **Knxwledge** (who you might know from a little record called *To Pimp A Butterfly*) – make an exceedingly clean pair, even as they deal almost entirely in the gritty: vocals that sound lived in for a couple of lifetimes; beats that kick up dust as they bump; and an 18-track set that plays like a mixtape merging skits, songs, and snippets into a package of fluid groove and rough-cut rap 'n' soul gems. You may have heard these two out in the world, on their own or sprinkling some of their musical gold dust on someone else's songs, but this is what happens when **.Paak** and **Knx** get home, lay back, light up, and let it go. Now, a year later, it only made sense for **Knxwledge**, being the prolific remixer that he is, to remix his own album – paring things down to 12 tracks yet adding a new interpretation to the tracks featuring **Anderson .Paak's** vocals. Looks like one of 2016's best albums will also become one of 2017's. You need this.



K. MICHELLE KIMBERLY: THE PEOPLE I USED TO KNOW ATLANTIC

Just like a revolving door, people enter and exit our lives throughout the years, leaving negative and positive impressions. On *Kimberly: The People I Used To Know*, Memphis, TN R&B firecracker **K. Michelle** examines those relationships. Fearlessly showing scars, she moves on from pain with her most passionate, punchy, and powerful body of work to date. In a turn that may surprise many casual listeners, **Michelle** drew immense influence from her first love: country music. The honesty of the genre's lyricism spoke loudly to **K. Michelle** during the process. "The first tape I ever got was by The Judds," she says. "I love Chris Stapleton, The Pistol Annies, Miranda Lambert, and The Dixie Chicks. Those are big influences." **Michelle** introduced the record with the simmering and smoked-out slow burn of "Birthday." Co-written with Safaree Samuels, her unmistakable delivery simply seduces. On the other end of the spectrum, the upbeat "Either Way" [feat. Chris Brown] turns up with explosive chemistry. Then, there's "Make This Song Cry." Over guitar lead and finger-snaps, it showcases her dynamic vocal range and intimate lyricism as she literally leaves tears on the track.



THE ROLLING STONES ON AIR UME/ INTERSCOPE

On Air is a new compilation of radio recordings made by the **Rolling Stones** between 1963 and 1965 for BBC shows such as Saturday Club, Top Gear, Rhythm and Blues and the Joe Loss Pop Show. Eight tracks performed for the various shows were never recorded by the **Stones** for a commercial release; seven more made their debut on air before being released on albums or EPs. That underlines the fact that as their stature as major artists grew ever greater, the **Stones** were such frequent visitors to the BBC that they were constantly striving to perform a wide selection of material. More than 50 years after they were recorded, the tapes have been through an "audio source separation" process at Abbey Road Studios in London, to rebalance and remix the source material into a fuller sound. This is the **Rolling Stones** where it all started, playing the music they loved so much – blues, R&B and even country! Highlights include "Fannie Mae," first recorded by blues artist Buster Brown in 1959, Tommy Tucker's "Hi Heel Sneakers" and Bo Diddley's "Cops and Robbers." There's also the chance to hear vibrantly live radio renditions of such early Jagger-Richards co-writes as "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," "The Last Time" and "The Spider And The Fly." Raw perfection!