

o u t t h i s w e e k

albums of the week

akron/family : set 'em wild, set 'em free we've been waiting for their return for what seems like aeons & finally they're back! they may have shed a member but remain consistently hard to pin down & continue to spread their tentacles in every conceivable direction. 'set 'em wild...', as its cover suggests, sees the band effect their own entirely unique & inclusive vision of a united states of music. from their signature close harmony vocals, to the fela-like rhythmic momentum, heady funkadelic guitar chops, intricate all farka toure chord tapestries, skittering, almost timbaland-esque electronic percussion & frenzied gusts of albert ayler brass...it's all here & sometimes all at once! all you can be sure of is their joyous & unrestrained approach that embraces music in all its forms. "strictly speaking, theirs is a kind of modern folk music but the akrons' musical connection & skill allows for wild, instinctual experimentalism bringing together such disparate influences as '70s rock, african funk & '80s hip hop... heady, bodily, beautiful stuff" – *mojo*. [crammed](#)

the horrors : primary colours there was much excitement when the horrors unveiled their new single 'sea within a sea' online a few months back. no-longer was this the art-school chancer band of yester year... somehow they had morphed into something fresh & exciting, serving up a sublime slice of psychedelic krautrock-inspired brilliance. the talk of portishead's geoff barrow being involved with production only helped fuel the anticipation. thankfully, it doesn't disappoint. whilst references are easy to make (from the mbv fuzz of opener of 'mirror's image', the spacemen 3 drone ballad 'i only think of you' or the jesus & mary chain squall of 'who can say'), there is still a very real, natural quality to the songs here, which at times hark back to the kind of experimental fuzz of the early-period creation bands. forget about the horrors you thought you knew, this is the sound of a band who've grown up & found their stride. "it slowly dawns on you that the horrors are your new favourite band" – *4/5, uncut*. "feels like the british art-rock album we've all been waiting for" *9/10 - nme*. [xl](#)

the pink mountaintops : outside love (cd & lp) the 3rd album from steve mcbean, frontman of shop faves black mountain. this record features 10 songs of love & hate that read like a danielle steele romance novel but would probably make for bad television. with thick spector-esque layers, grand chords teetering on the brink of feedback chaos, & reverb-soaked country jaunts as well as mcbean's fabulously poetic, soulful & inspired lyrics this is a wonderful noise-pop record that is the velvet underground to black mountain's black sabbath. with contributions from members of a silver mt. zion, godspeed you black emperor, destroyer, jesse sykes, sunn 0))), whiskeytown, jackie o motherf**ker, lightning dust, superconductor & more, this is an assured record that will no doubt further mcbean's already impeccable credentials. "a-grade rock n' roll – profound, damaged, brimming with wondrous dreams" *4/5 – mojo*, "outstanding" – *nme*. [jagjaguar](#)

rock / indie / modern classical

the maccabees : wall of arms (cd & lp) the 2nd album from the mighty maccabees. now paired with the arcade fire producer markus dravs, the album introduces horns & keys to their signature staccato guitar attack. they explore far darker musical territories & emotions on this record, demonstrating the broad expanse of the band's skills & proving that there's much more to this charming quintet than their brilliantly poppy & vibrant debut, 'colour it in', offered up. streets ahead of their peers, the maccabees offer up a far more interesting, diverse & widescreen view of the indie pop spectrum. "a collection of atmospheric, heartfelt pop songs that frequently fly off at unexpected angles. the maccabees join the horrors & jack peñate as supposedly "landfill indie" acts who've come back fighting with far superior 2nd efforts" *4/5 - guardian*. [polydor](#)

st vincent : actor (cd & lp) sophomore effort from one-time polyphonic spree member & multi-instrumentalist annie clark. apparently the inspiration for this record came from film scores, with clark immersing herself in some of her favourites : 'badlands', 'pierrot le fou' & 'the wizard of oz'. certainly the resulting tracks here are as cinematic as pop songs can be but the imaginary movie they soundtrack is a private one, revealing its storyline in hushed, cunning couplets & cascades of scathing guitar. melodies are transposed & inverted as the fantasy of disney is juxtaposed with the sweep of morricone, as igor stravinsky scores roger corman's horror flicks. with some great orchestration & a huge palette of sound, this highly imaginative record flits between the crunch of a tank & the grace of a chamber ensemble with effortless ease. an inspired album for fans of sufjan stevens, feist, andrew bird & jenny lewis. "stunningly audacious" *4/5 - uncut*. [4ad](#)

peaches : i feel cream (cd & lp) a new peaches album is never anything less than an entertaining prospect, as you wonder just what kind of unhinged filth will come out of her mouth. this time around she's teamed up with simian mobile disco, soulwax, digitalism & drums of death for undoubtedly her most pop sounding album to date. far from mellowing out or taking things easy, peaches now seems as relevant to the musical landscape as ever before. the beats remain as harsh & uncompromising as ever but with a new found melodic groove that has only been previously hinted at. a perfect example of this is opening track 'serpentine', the title track 'i feel cream' or the luscious synth-pop of 'lose you', which sees peaches deliver one of her most delicate & graceful vocal performances yet. & yes there's still a fair bit of trademark filth here too. "fabulous" *4/5 – mojo*, "a diverse album that retains her trademark dirty electro" – *guardian*. [xl](#)

alasdair roberts : spoils (cd & lp) the 4th album from scottish singer/songwriter since disbanding appendix out in 2002. with a fine array of musicians backing him, bringing a loose & lively mixture of drums, bass, piano, flute, glockenspiel, harpsichord, harmonium, viola, synthesizer, dulcimer, psaltery, hurdy gurdy, fiddle & of course guitars & voices, 'spoils' has a lot on deck, but it's meted out evenly & with an intense energy, always in service of the songs, which are marked with some of alasdair's finest melodies. additionally, 'spoils' ingratiates new compositions in a deeply personal manner with the world of traditional music that has sunk beyond the horizon for too many of us. it is a gift to these latter days that a man like roberts exists, to sing us back to our ancient home. *"part-incredible string band, part- lal waterson, but mostly magnificently unique"* 4/5 - the guardian, *"a kind of caledonian analogue to bonnie 'prince' billy, treating his indigenous folk music with the same tough love that oldham has for the appalachian tradition"* - uncut. [drag city](#)

isis : wavering radiant (cd & double yellow vinyl) the music of isis is a good metaphor for their 12-year career : patient, meticulous, fraught with tension & gradually building towards an apex of seismic proportions. from the hypnotically bludgeoning down-tuned riffs of their early years to the gracefully sprawling passages on their pivotal 2nd album 'oceanic' & continuing through the intricate rhythmic textures & increased melody of 2006's 'in the absence of truth', isis have successfully navigated the process of evolving without disavowing their initial vision. while 'wavering radiant' is finely structured, dynamically varied & melodically developed, it's also unpredictable, expansive & densely layered. the record provides instant gratification while also harnessing the slow burn of a classic, revealing the full extent of its mysteries only after repeated listens. [conspiracy](#)

conor oberst & the mystic village band : outer south (limited cd & lp) following his 2008 release under his own name (his 1st non bright-eyes record since 2001), oberst & his band took to the road as conor oberst & the mystic valley band. while touring in support of oberst, the talented 6-piece began to write new songs, with each band member sharing their compositions & working them out on the road. energized by the live performances & eager to capture the synergy they felt onstage, oberst took his musical compadres to texas to capture these gems on tape. the result is the sparkling 'outer south' with oberst's songwriting & delivery remaining an engaging presence but the addition of songs from the other band members, make for a multi-textured & colourful collaboration. the prolific indie-rock icon, has outdone himself yet again. [wichita](#)

the wave pictures : if you leave it alone (cd & lp) bravely mining the lost essence of british indie, the wave pictures were critically lauded last year in 2008 for their debut album 'instant coffee baby'. short listed for the guardian 'new album award' & included in plan b's 'albums of 2008', their seductively shabby love songs evoking the grubby romance of youth have won over public & critics alike. 'if you leave it alone' embraces a "very proper, very old fashioned way of recording", cutting back on the electric arrangements of their debut, favouring stanley brinks' emotive horns & gorgeous finger picking, placing a renewed focus on story telling. it's all warm & fuzzy & heart-warming & is likely to appeal to fans of herman dune, jeffrey lewis, darren hayman or emmy the great or [moshi moshi](#)

john foxx & robin guthrie : mirrorball new studio collaboration between electro pioneer john foxx & former cocteau twins guitarist/songwriter robin guthrie. like john foxx's recent a secret life album with steve jansen (ex-japan), his collaboration with robin guthrie was an idea that began when the pair performed at a harold budd concert in may 2005. layers of echoes & reverberations are explored on 'mirrorball' so that guthrie's unique guitar work merges with foxx's abstract, often improvised vocals - a style which foxx has explored on his own cathedral oceans albums. this is gorgeously ethereal record that calls to mind the likes of sigur ros, the quietest moments of explosions in the sky or the cocteau twins (obviously). [metamatic](#)

gallows : grey britain (cd/cd+dvd) welcome to grey britain : a land of poverty, petty violence, bad diets & bad attitudes. a land of dole queues, decay & dealers ; ignorance & jeremy kyle dna tests ; knives & gangs & asbos worn as badge of honour. welcome to gallows' new state of the nation address. their 2nd album was recorded alongside a 33-piece string section with producer garth 'gggarth' richardson (ratm, biffy clyro) at the controls. their fierce, all-out, 5-pronged attack, lead from the front by frank carter, utilises loud, heavily distorted guitar riffs & screaming vocals to incredible effect. includes a guest spot from biffy clyro's simon neil. *"sports some decidedly non-punk manoeuvres in the form of piano-concerto codas & unnerving sound effects that elevate the band from mere street-punk cliches"* 4/5 - alternative press. [black envelope](#)

allessi's ark : notes from the treehouse debut album from talented 18-year old londoner allessi laurent-marke, who left school at 16 to pursue her musical dreams, a move which seems to have paid off. allessi's ark descends from an identifiable lineage of fellow female songstresses such as kate bush, tori amos, cat power, feist, laura marling & bat for lashes. her songs inhabit a sensory world of horses & asteroids, of counting stars & freckles & most importantly love, all delivered with laurent-marke's breathless & idiosyncratic enunciation. these are whimsical exercises in orchestral pop, full of sweeping melodies & perfectly nuanced atmospherics, produced by mike mogis (bright eyes/m.ward). *"precisely enunciating over harps & percussion from the silly box, she tells lightly spooky stories about horses, libraries & shitty weather. fun"* - guardian. [virgin](#)

double dagger : more (cd & lp) this baltimore 3-piece are occasionally described as "very loud pop" or "angry pop" - double dagger create music that is both visceral & melodic. utilizing deceptively simple instrumentation, denny bowen (drums), nolen strals (vocals) & bruce willen (bass) create a cacophonous wall of sound as the baltimore trio double dagger. their dynamic combination of energy, melody, angst & playfulness is captured so exquisitely on this record, their debut for thrill jockey. a delicious racket for fans of no age, lightning bolt or pissed jeans. [thrill jockey](#)

hanne hukkelberg : blood from a stone 3rd album by the acclaimed norwegian artist which is in part inspired by her teenage past as a member of various rock bands & in part by her 80s dominated collection of indie/rock albums (the likes of sonic youth, cocteau twins, pixies, einstürzende neubauten, siouxsie & the banshees & p.j. harvey have all exerted an influence over hanne's new songs). this record continues her penchant for combining traditional & unusual instrumentation to form a soundscape unique to her & the bulk of her vocals are first takes with her lyrics being more direct & less introverted than on previous albums. for a self-confessed 'rock' album, 'blood from a stone' still manages to include field recordings of seagulls, clogs, kitchen utensils, freezers, stoves & a school desk. [netwerk](#)

magik markers : balf quarry (cd & lp) following 2007's incredible 'boss' was always going to be a difficult task but by working with engineer scott colburn (sun city girls, animal collective, sir richard bishop), magik markers have come up trumps again on 'balf quarry'. tremouring mid-rhythms form the body, with a couple of showers of hardcore. on slower tunes, the mass of brooding guitar tone generated is elisa ambrogio's signature, a carving all of her own. the songs are barely an arm's length away from chaos & horror but the duo are locked together, beating it out & slicing through all the atmosphere, elisa's voice is a spear of light. an intense & captivating lo-fi mixture of overloaded hardcore thrashers, plaintive (often piano inflected) ballads, long droney passages & ace blues workouts. recommended. [drag city](#)

the seal cub clubbing club : super science fiction a name that certainly doesn't roll off the tongue but does amuse, s.c.c.c. have been accumulating praise from many of the more alternative radio djs for their unique & unpredictable pop oeuvre. certainly their songs have a knack of starting out as fairly accessible radio-friendly indie-pop, then venturing off into stranger territories. catchy, yet still definitely a little odd, there's a certain proggy, exploratory quality to the band's wandering ways that makes them definitely worthy of further investigation. we had a tough job thinking of any similar bands to this lot, which can only be a good thing. *"the s.c.c.c. combine sonic force & innovation with a knack for surreal pop"* – fact. *"the array of genres is mixed & indecisive, flitting between styles & eras effortlessly"* – artrocker. [tri tone](#)

diamond watch wrists : ice capped at both ends (very limited, available in selected indies only) this record marks one of those special musical moments when artists somewhat randomly collide & combine their efforts to produce something inspired & unprovoked. in this case guillermo scott heron (prefuse 73) crossed paths with zach hill, the drummer of hella & the pair ended up collaborating on what would become 'ice capped at both ends'. both psychedelic & personal, free & driven, complex & accessible, these songs are soaked in multi-levelled vocal harmonies atop atmospheric production & forward-moving drums, with nods to 60's european acid-folk, prog & krautrock. an interesting & very listenable project. *"repeated listens reveal an ambitious, shape-shifting pop album with idiosyncrasies at every turn"* – dusted. [warp](#)

male : all are welcome male is jonathan krohn & ben mjolsness, who have been working in the chicago improvisation scene for over 5 years. for this record they approached some of their friends from the avant-jazz, improv, experimental & rock scenes to help them flesh out an idea where the tonal meets the frenetic, where the ethereal comes up against the sounds of beer bottles & pirated am radio. each element was recorded in one take with musicians from exploding star orchestra, pan american, fessenden, joan of arc & others. 'all are welcome' ranges from meditative drones to contemplative guitar work to minimalist patterns. highly recommended for fans of soporous, koen holtkamp or machinefabriek. *"male could end up being mentioned alongside tortoise or explosions in the sky before too long"* – earshot. [other electricities](#)

richard swift : the atlantic ocean the oregon-based songwriter is one of pop's true mavericks. his forebears are artists with the same kind of utter drenching musicality & creative glee - randy newman, paul mccartney, van dyke parks & prince. swift favours the drums, piano & bass but can pick up the banjo or turn his hand to a cornucopia of synthesizers & mellotron if the mood should take him. obsessed with 70's production detail, swift is self-deprecating, beholden to high ideals & a keen, wry observer of modern life. enlisting engineer chris colbert (the walkmen), accompanied by multi-instrumentalist casey foubert (sufjan stevens), swift is on song & in find fettle, largely relying on the piano for the melodic strength of the album & synths for the texture & colour. swift himself refers to the album's sound as "prince sitting in on john lennon's plastic ono sessions". for fans of lens lekman, rufus wainwright & his aforementioned influences. [secretly canadian](#)

the paper chase : someday this could all be yours vol.1 the 5th full-length from the dallas-based avant-rock band & micah p.hinson favourite. this is a concept piece about natural disasters, spanning 2 albums (volume 2 is due in 2010). band leader john congleton wrings the most sinister & destructive elements out of the natural world & creates characters frantically trying to survive elements far beyond their control. this is about as close as the band have allowed themselves to get to outright passages of pop melody. that's right, the band that thought nothing of chucking seemingly random bundles of notes into segues or pauses between vocal gasps have given way to something approaching a pop sensibility - albeit a particularly ferocious & skewed one. *"rampant brilliance"* 5/5 – kerrang. for fans of ...trail of dead, swans, xiu xiu. [southern records](#)

esser : braveface the ex-ladyfuzz drummer, ben esser, makes his 1st foray into the world of the longplayer with 'braveface'. this one-man-band with a truly massive quiff has melded electronics with his pop sensibilities to deliver an eclectic album, co-produced by man of the moment, lexxx. esser's weird pop combines the classic pop of beck or blur with the modern day, chuck-it-all-into-the-mix approach of lily allen, resulting in a catchy, radio-friendly album laden with summer anthems. ska-influenced electro pop with wry & interesting lyrics make for a confident & fun record from this multi-talented essex boy. [transgressive](#)

the hospitals : hairdryer peace the vinyl came & went, the made no.3 in the wire's best of 2008 list & now, finally, its getting a cd issue. the san francisco duo deliver an unapologetic 3rd full-length of complete mind-fuckery - a dusty, nasty scuzz. lead by adam stonehouse, this record also feats new member chris gunn from the hunches. along with fellow lo-fi demolitionists sic alps (of which stonehouse was an original member), the san fran scene is currently pumping out some of the most disorderly, analog-oriented psychedelia around & this record is a key example. it's either going to be deemed an unlistenable racket or an essential underground classic, depending on how your ears are tuned. it's a demented freakout that's for sure - play it loud, play it often - if you can handle it!! "*a reminder of what a vital force rock music can be when its energy is strapped to a voracious creative imagination*" - the wire. [meds](#)

fredo viola : the turn (cd & dvd) imagine if the beach boys found god, joined a monastery & started composing & singing medieval baroque-infused hymns & you might get close to imagining the beautifully unique work of fredo viola, a former boy soprano born in london who grew up in new york & los angeles. combining traces of singer-songwriter pop, ambient electronica, classical, religious hymns & medieval folk ballads but with a strong & singular style entirely his own, fredo says, "when people ask, i usually say beach boys meets sigur ros", which sounds pretty much on the money. full of dazzling originality & spine-tingling beauty, this is a sublime debut that seems to have sprung from nowhere but will undoubtedly go on to greater things. the accompanying dvd provides videos that compliment the music perfectly. "*a glorious album that imagines the beach boys as gregorian chanters with brian eno at the helm*" - independent. [because music](#)

dufus : in monstrous attitude although they have already influenced many a band in the freak-folk/anti-folk scene (moldy peaches, man man, usaisamonster & akron family), this is perhaps dufus' most inspiring work to date. it's a perfect mixture of their signature chaotic, childlike compositions (which critics have compared to the mastermind experimentations of captain beefheart, zappa, ween & mr. bungle) & passionate, crescendo-ing melodies that leave you gasping for breath with every twangy note. 'in monstrous attitude', dufus' 3rd album with roir, is mixed by shimmy disc's revered kramer & barely contained in a colossal digipak with comic book art by anti-folk hero, jeffrey lewis. "dufus, a band whose crammed songs meld the looseness of the anti-folk music with a sense of humour out of frank zappa" - new york times. [roir](#)

the dirty strangers : west 12 to wittering (another west side story) who are these guys that can get members of the biggest rock band in the world to play on their albums? a good time rock & roll band from shepherd bush, that's who. their 1st album was released in 1987 & featured keith richards, ronnie wood, the late paul fox (the ruts), mickey gallagher (the blockheads) & band founder, alan clayton. the new album still features keith & ronnie, plus the legendary joe brown. at times, clayton sounds uncannily similar to mick jagger - he sports a raunchy, low-growlish tone & the rhythm section is solid a la late 70's stones - but with elements of punkish abandon. keith plays piano & leaves all guitar playing to clayton, bar ronnie playing bottleneck on 2 tracks. this is an album that should be bought on its own merit but will also appeal to fans that collect rolling stones' guest appearances. [track records](#)

yusuf islam : roadsinger - to warm you through the night (cd & limited cd/dvd) the follow-up to 2006's 'an other cup' by the legendary artist formerly known as cat stevens. with an uplifting mood & beautifully written & played guitar lines scattered throughout his music, islam continues to sound as fresh as ever, proving just why he is deemed to be one of the greatest songwriters of all time. co-produced with martin terefe (james morrison, jason mraz, martha wainwright) & recorded in london, los angeles & nashville, 'roadsinger' features guest appearances from james morrison, michelle branch & holly williams (granddaughter of hank williams, sr.). [island](#)

esben & the witch : 33 (5 track cd ep) a lovely ep of haunting, cinematic, electronic-peppered melancholy from brighton band esben & the witch. with the vocals at times reminiscent of beth gibbons (perhaps no surprise given the band are big portishead fans), there's also a strong presence of reverb-soaked guitars here that conjure up the kind of disorientating swirls that the likes of sigur ros excel at. a great set that fans of the aforementioned & indeed bat for lashes, bjork & other such artists should check out. "*sounds a lot like a decrepit sunlit mansion being overtaken by the dark, organic fertility of its mysterious garden*" - source magazine. [self released](#)

doll & the kicks : doll & the kicks following a hyped show at the concorde, & now about to embark on a tour with none other than morrissey, it seems things are most definitely on the up for brighton's doll & the kicks. this is high energy pop punk bristling with hooks & choruses that pitches camp somewhere between classic blondie & no doubt, with frontwoman doll leading the charge with her distinct, powerful vocals. definitely worth getting in on the act early before this lot go massive. "*high quality, driven, eccentric pop*" - artrocker. "*full on feisty versatile firecracker of a band doll & the kicks confirmed to all & sundry that heavy can also be melodic, varied & fun*" - bbc southern counties. [self released](#)

madina lake : attics to eden the explosive follow-up to the chicago band's successful 2007 debut. the post-hardcore band have gained a reputation for their hard-hitting sound, which takes influence from the likes of smashing pumpkins to nine inch nails. this is a monstrous collection of impassioned & infectious tunes harnessing the wealth of experience gained from touring with the likes of all american rejects, paramore, arctic monkeys, fall out boy & muse. the 12 songs on the album are replete with otherworldly atmospherics, epic guitars, intricate & often punishing drum-work, melodic choruses, imposing bass lines, audacious instrumentation & nathan's unpredictable, inescapable vocals. [roadrunner](#)

wrekmeister harmonies : recordings made in public spaces volume one (cd &

dvd) a project initiated by chicago-based sound artist j.r. robinson who has spent the past few years creating ambient soundscapes within major museums all over the globe, working (among others) with the guggenheim museum in new york, the getty museum in los angeles & paris' centre pompidou. robinson has injected these recordings into collaborations with some like-minded heavy hitters from the noise, post-rock & jazz worlds such as david yow (jesus lizard/scratch acid), mark shippy & pat samson (us maple), azifa yousefi, john herndon & jeff parker (tortoise), keefe jackson, fred lonberg-holm & ken vandermark. the result is a distinctive hybrid of sound art & avant-garde musics, evoking the essences & influences of masterworks like joe mcphée's nation time, lou reed's metal machine music & the sound collages of stockhausen. [atavistic](#)

the do : a mouthful

debut album from the french/finnish duo comprised of dan levy & olivia b.merilahti, who deliver cutting edge pop-rock in the vein of the cardigans or jenny wilson. "the dø sound, at various points, like a female eminem backed by a brass band, like the cardigans stripped to nothing but a jazzy guitar strum & a sexy whisper, like 'iko iko' by the dixie cups re-imagined by pingu, like moldy peaches with a hint of continental sophistication, like 'the block party' by lisa left-eye lopez if she'd grown up listening to pavement, like pj harvey on the moon & like os mutantas at their most chilled-out. awesome" 9/10 – dis. [cinq 7](#)

indigo girls : poseidon & the bitter bug

(2cd deluxe edition with studio & acoustic sessions & bonus track) emily saliers & amy ray have been playing together for 20 years, this being their 13th album. by now, they've learned how to anticipate each other's artistic direction & that long-nurtured synergy shows here. the album was recorded in atlanta in a whirlwind 3 week session – they wanted to keep a sense of spontaneity & discovery to the process. it's the songwriting that shines, with the duo exploring new approaches to melody, harmonics & rhythm, especially on saliers' 'digging for your dream', which she says is "as close to r&b as i've ever gotten" & ray's 'sugar tongue', a fevered meditation on colonialism that finds her experimenting with her higher vocal range to capture an innocence not commonly displayed by the fiery rocker. [welk](#)

mexican institute of sound : soy sauce

camilo lara never set out with the intention of taking his musical career seriously. at first, he was simply creating holiday mixes for friends but then his friends convinced him that he should take his songs off his computer & into the studio. 4 years later, lara, known as the mexican institute of sound (m.i.s.) is building on the momentum of his breakthrough sophomore release 'pinata'. he covers everything from converting the traditional sounds of cumbia to a full-on electronic dance track, paying tribute to hip hop luminaries j dilla & biggie with mexican sonidos & singing a love song as if serge gainsbourg had spent time in the mayan jungle. includes 2 collaborations with joselo rangel from café tacuba & ad rock from the beastie boys. funky breaks & beats battle mariachi trumpets in a tequila filled hot tub. [cooking vinyl](#)

new york dolls : cause i sez so

the iconic band reunite with former producer todd rundgren for their 4th studio album which includes 11 original compositions & a new version of 'trash' from their 1973 debut album. the new york dolls are now : david johansen (vocals); sylvain sylvain (guitar); steve conte (guitar); brian delaney (drums) & sami yaffa (bass). the dolls have fostered an album with many focal points : the glam-riffery opening to the title track, the spaghetti-western whistling of 'temptation to exist' & the rhythmic reggae of reimagined classic 'trash'. throughout, david johansen's simple but beguiling vocals carry the weight of the band's history & serve as a great reminder of what has always made this band so influential. [rhino](#)

bird names : sing the browns

bird names are a perfectly off-centre pop band from chicago. their songs are often ragged & experimental whilst remaining inventive & catchy. characterised by a kaleidoscopic approach to songwriting, bird names mix together a world of ideas, instruments & musical styles into a sound full of personality. sing-along waltzes can walk hand-in-hand with ad hoc scrambled guitar lines yet some semblance of balance is always held on to. this 5-piece write & record the songs as a collective effort & in live performances, the swapping of instruments between songs further demonstrates the freeform nature of the group. officially the band's 5th full-length album, 'sings the browns' is typical in its scope. escaping the acute lo-fidelity of previous efforts, it is a sky's the limit album scribbled in loose, intuitive musicianship. [upset the rhythm](#)

les six : le groupe des six - selected works 1915-1945

(2cd) the latest release from the itm label documenting links between avant-garde music & art in the 20th century. mentored by erik satie & jean cocteau from 1917 to 1923, the celebrated group of young french composers known as les six comprised georges auric, louis durey, arthur honegger, darius milhaud, francis poulenc & germaine tallef aire. this 150 minute remastered double cd set features selected piano & orchestral works by les six composed between 1915 & 1945, including collaborations with jean cocteau, guillaume apollinaire, max jacob, marcelle meyer & denise duval. all selections were recorded between 1928 & 2007, including some personally performed or conducted by the composers themselves. gorgeous stuff. [itm](#)

lee hazlewood : movin' on

one of the rarest lee hazlewood albums ever, a mid 70's set recorded for polydor in sweden, & one that represents a really unique chapter in lee's career overseas. at times, the album's got a very strong country feel, more so than even other hazlewood records which always had a bit of twang, yet at other points the record moves into more familiar vocal work recalling some of the modes that lee had laid down on his best work of the late 60s. not all songs are originals, but lee definitely makes all the music his own, & the arrangements by david whitaker & lars samuelson move around in ways to match the spirit of hazlewood's mood on each tune. this reissue features some really great liner notes filled with the kind of personal recollections that make lee's life seem like it was always a blast to live. [ace](#)

bill wells & maher shalal hash baz : gok a superbly wonky affair as falkirk pianist bill wells teams up with japanese horn-wielders maher shalal hash baz. the result is a charming album of beautiful & warm melodies. alive, warm & immediate, it doesn't try to cover up mistakes, it embraces them, making them part of the record. as such, 'gok' cherry-picks from wells' existing repertoire, the doughty pianist accompanied by maher's school orchestra-like brass & woodwind ensemble whose flawed but enthusiastic attempts to stay in tune add poignancy to the sombrely melodic essays. an endearing & uplifting jaunt that will warm the coldest of hearts. "akin to the portsmouth sinfonia backing burt bacharach – sublime" – 4/5, mojo. "the ensemble's very fragility becomes their strength" – uncut. [geographic](#)

mike patton : crank - high voltage soundtrack amid highspeed guitar riffs & vocal exclamations of 'yahoo!!' the track 'supercharged' speaks for most of the music mike patton has created for this adrenaline-laced sequel to 2006's jason statham vehicle crank. in nearly an hour of music, spaced out over 32 tracks, patton lays down a barrage of mostly dissonant, electronic action tunes. all but one of the tracks clock out under three minutes, & the average is around 90 seconds. this is an album of vigorous, driven adventure. in short, it's like a feature score on steroids. what with the film being about a guy who has to keep his adrenaline high in order to stay alive, this score fits the picture perfectly. [emi](#)

& what will be left of them? : the hi-fi low life these 13 tracks from the worcester clatterpop kids fly by in a gallop of male/female shouty pop, crazily whirring organ & heart-attack drumming, like an over-excited b-52s or bis. each song on the album is timed to never outstay its welcome, with 9 of the 13 clocking in at well under 3 minutes. it is testament to the band's ear for a pop hook that they are able to create a sound in such a phenomenally short time which sticks to your brain well after the album's secret track has passed by. an inspired, spiky, pogoing frenzy. "hyperactive dance-pop guaranteed to lift the spirits of even the terminally teed-off" [soundsxp](#), "exceedingly brilliant, dirty scuzzy indie pop that slaps you in the face & demands that you shake the sloth from your limbs & dance like a deranged idiot" – [thelineofbestfit](#). [popart london](#)

brontosaurus chorus : you've created a monster (mini album) throughout these 7 tracks, the north london 8-piece weave together bubblegum-pop vocals with joyous indie-pop, earning them comparisons to the polyphonic spree & belle & sebastian. the band have doubled in size from the original quartet to some kind of pop octopus - 8 different colourful characters vying for attention & yet moving as a unit. catchy, chunky, tweekpop, lifted by the embellishments of trumpet, violins & accordion. [popart london](#)

baja : the aether obelisk the 4th release in the baja saga by composer daniel vujanic, touches the borderlines of many forms from chamber music & psychedelia, to post rock to pop/jazz-infected electronic music. the record exploits more vocal & repetitive elements than its predecessors & the overall mood is also less melancholic & nocturnal than previous offerings. for fans of collections of colonies of bees, the drift or human bell. "saunters through glitchy electronica, tender indie, dreamy jazz & spectral chamber music, leaving the global metropolis a slightly richer place" - [experimusic](#). [other electricities](#)

elysian fields : the afterlife the noir-rock legends are fronted by jennifer charles who possesses one of the most smooth & velvety voices in music. with her writing partner oren bloedow, an uncommonly musical guitarist, they create sultry, jazzy, piano backed torch songs. they have cultivated a fan-base of the world's cultural cognoscenti - late greats joey ramone & jeff buckley counted among them. mainstays of the thriving downtown new york scene, they have worked with such notables as john zorn, marc ribot & an endless list of the community's finest musicians. their membership over these years has been a tight knit family of downtown's most creative players, including all of the members of jeff buckley's 'grace'-era band. a fairly straightforward record but one that becomes more mesmerising with every listen – perfect for late night listening. [vicious circle](#)

howard eliott payne : bright light ballads debut solo album from the frontman & songwriter for liverpool band the stands. howard quit the group & has now recorded his 1st solo album with legendary producer ethan johns (ryan adams/kings of leon/ray lamontagne). featuring some of the finest liverpool musicians (including his sister & soulstress candie payne), 'bright light ballads' is a unique melting pot of liverpool melody, hip city swagger & the wide-sigh soulfulness of the wild open country. rootsy & unearthly in equal measure, this is a strong debut of country-flavoured songs with a wilco vibe. for fans of the stands, ryan adams, steve earle, lambchop, wilco. [move city](#)

peter wright : snow blind (2cd) big dark gritty guitar sludge from the new zealand native, peter wright, who has invested a significant chunk of the last 20 years investigating ways of deconstructing the guitar, presenting re-imagined abstract audio fields & loosening the shackles by which the instrument is traditionally constrained. his sound probably falls into the drone category but he sprinkles the genre with his own magic & manages to take things way deep. imagine if stars of the lid had turned to the dark side of the force. an essential listening experience for fans of godspeed or windy & carl. [install](#)

pajaro sunrise : done / undone (2cd) yuri mendez & pepe lopez (aka pajaro sunrise) released their first, very well received album back in 2006. the follow-up, features the newly incorporated band member mario delgado. however, the group disbanded somewhere along the way with yuri remaining the sole member & the result is a mixture of some of the bands songs & many of the tracks yuri had been recording on his own. this spanish outfit call to mind sparkly pop sensibilities of the likes of kings of convenience / the whitest boy alive & peter, bjorn & john or it hugs back. "'done / undone' is simply beautiful & pajaro sunrise cannot continue to be kept this secret for much longer" 5/5 – [subba cultcha](#). [lovemonk](#)

cracker : sunrise in the land of milk & honey david lowery, the creative genius behind cracker & camper van beethoven, is back with a great new set of edgy, innovative & original rock songs. this brand new studio album sees a strong return to the punk / rockier side of the band & guests include john doe from x, adam duritz from counting crows & patterson hood from drive by truckers. "lowery's piercing intelligence & smartass humour click on 'sunrise...', his smoke-stained voice adding genuine soul to the quartet's chunky guitar pop" 4/5 - spin. [evangeline](#)

emma tricca : minor white italian-english singer-songwriter emma tricca came to the attention of finders keepers & twisted nerve boss andy votel in the summer of 2006 whilst she was playing at the green man festival. since then she's participated in jarvis cocker's meltdown festival in 2007 & toured with folk icon john renbourn. 'minor white' is the culmination of all her work to date, a debut album that sounds utterly uncontrived & effortlessly accomplished as a first collection of songs. the arrangements tend to be very simple & stark, chiefly consisting of tricca's seductive, whispery vocal & brightly fingerpicked acoustic guitars with only a light smattering of additional instrumentation running through the album, illuminating pieces like 'paris rain' with violin & chiming dulcimer-type sounds. lovely. [bird records](#)

middle class rut : 25 years this californian duo deliver 6 tracks of hooks, punches & grooves aplenty. middle class rut are zack lopez (guitar/vox) & sean stockham (drums/vox) from sacramento ca who formed in december 2006. their loud blazing hot alt-rock has garnered them considerable acclaim & has earned them comparisons to the likes of jane's addiction, rage against the machine, refused & at the drive in. "guitars that squall & claw like siamese cats in a cauldron of pitch, rhythms so sawn-off & blunt our cochlea's have splinters... this is the roughest rawest racket we have heard in some time. exhilarating, like running naked through a bee storm" - nme. [bright antenna](#)

immaculate machine : high on jackson hill 'high on jackson hill' is the latest release from victoria, canada's immaculate machine. following up the critically acclaimed release 'fables', the band traded in the recording studio in favour of on-location recording sessions in songwriter brooke gallupe's parents' empty house. instead of being meticulously polished in the studio, songs were hammered out on the spot, with brooke stepping more to the forefront in song writing & arrangements. between classic rock riffs & thumping drums, with on t-rex influenced riffs topped with playful glammy vocals, there are also quieter sections where immaculate machine have created songs which touch on a more folkier side of the band. 12 complex yet cohesive songs, that will no doubt expand the bands every growing audience. [mint](#)

lisa hannigan : sea saw (uk version) the 28 year-old irish indie/folk singer just ended a long-time musical partnership with damien rice. she sings with the same angelic translucence as bjork but as soon as you tune into her lyrics, she reveals herself to be an artist who's disarmingly original & endearingly idiosyncratic. who else compares their lover's sadness to "a pre-shelled pistachio" . her album is sensory paradise sprinkled with alliteration & honeycombed with warm, romantic imagery. "a beaming presence. rice's next work is a plainer prospect without her. his loss is our gain" - financial times, "mesmerising" - the times. [hoop recordings](#)

the vaselines : enter the vaselines - deluxe edition (2cd) the vaselines have long been celebrated by musicians & indie rock enthusiasts across the globe, including superfan kurt cobain, while remaining underappreciated by the mainstream. this is effectively a deluxe-edition reissue of the 1992 sub pop release 'the way of the vaselines' with a new title & new cover art from the band & a whole lot of new material (the entirety of the 17-song 2nd cd has been added). originally mastered from a cassette tape, 'the way of the vaselines' compiled the band's 2 eps ('son of a gun' & 'dying for it') & their sole lp release ('dum-dum'). includes new mixes & re-mastered versions of everything by the vaselines, plus never-before-heard demos & live recordings from 1986 in bristol & 1988 in london. [sub pop](#)

castrovalva : castrovalva (mini album) this bass-&-drums duo may hail from leeds but it's the sounds of the american underground that castrovalva pay homage to on their debut mini-album. using the sonic arsenal of lightning bolt to power melvins-esque sludge riffing, in under half an hour castrovalva manage to conjure up the sound of the earth's bowels loosening in terror. this release sees castrovalva harness their powerful sound & drive it into harsh improvisational bass-driven progressive rock reminiscent of influences such as lightning bolt, xbrx, hella, arab on radar, death from above 1979 & oxes. [brew records](#)

sam lewis : everything you are encompassing influences from folk music to country & acoustic soul, 'everything you are' was written on the road - airport lounges, hotel lobbies, tour buses, dressing rooms, you name it - while sam was touring the us in his 'day job' as guitarist in kt tunstall's band. having digested a musical diet of classic american artists, from hank williams & robert johnson through to neil young & tom waits, the feel of classic americana courses through this stripped back, heartfelt album. [ruck records](#)

john wiese : circle snare john wiese is an artist & composer from los angeles. his ongoing projects include lhd & sissy spacek but is best known for his collaborations with the likes of sunn o))), wolf eyes, merzbow, smegma, kevin drumm & more, as well as his work as a solo artist. on this record, he makes a fearsome commotion. composed & realized in the midst of a comprehensive scandinavian/european tour in 2008, wiese found himself tangled deep in dialogue with his instruments & ideas. his usual electronic anatomy of drum machine, microphones, tapes & msp were broken out of their confines & developed into a more cogent & vital arsenal. those who have been stalking wiese all along - through the landmark statement 'soff punk', to the recent 'dramatic accessories' lp - will find 'circle snare' to be a revelatory work. [no fun productions](#)

british lions : british lions this is 1977. punk is happening & mott have ceased to exist. former medicine head frontman, songwriter & singer extraordinaire john fiddler, joins morgan fisher, dale griffin, ray majors & overend watts & british lions are born! at last released on cd for the first time ever, with 8 previously unreleased bonus tracks & comprehensive sleeve notes by dale griffin with input from john fiddler, morgan fisher, ray majors & overend watts. dale has also overseen the remastering of the original lp. 4.5/5 – amg. [angel air](#)

rolling stones : black & blue (remastered) recorded in germany, the netherlands, switzerland & the us, 1976's 'black & blue' features the wonderful ballads 'fool to cry' & 'memory motel' & some top notch riffing on 'hand of fate' & 'crazy mama'. the irresistibly funky 'hot stuff' became a club hit, a sign of things to come for a formidable band equally at ease with blues, rock, country, reggae or dance. *"they play with reggae extensively, funk & disco less so, making both sound like integral parts of the stones' lifeblood...there are times that you listen to the stones just to hear them play & this is one of them"* – all music guide. [polydor](#)

rolling stones: goats head soup (remastered) originally issued in 1973, 'goats head soup' was another transatlantic chart-topper. sliding out of perhaps the greatest winning streak in rock history, the stones slipped into decadence & rock star excess with this record, their sequel to 'exile on main st'. recording started at byron lee's dynamic sound studios in kingston, jamaica, in late 1972 & was completed in london & los angeles the following year. this may not be as downright funky, freaky & fantastic as 'exile...', yet the extra layer of gloss brings out the enunciated lyrics, added strings, wah-wah guitars, explicit sex & violence, making it all seem trippily decadent. packaged in another iconic sleeve shot by photographer david bailey. [polydor](#)

rolling stones : it's only rock n roll (remastered) it's uneven but at times, 'it's only rock 'n roll' catches fire. the songs & performances are stronger than those on 'goats head soup' - the tossed-off numbers sound effortless, not careless. throughout, the stones wear their title as the "world's greatest rock & roll band" with a defiant smirk, which makes the bitter cynicism of 'if you can't rock me' & the title track all the more striking & the reggae experimentation of 'luxury', the aching beauty of 'time waits for no one' (where mick taylor ended his tenure with some wonderful guitar work) & the agreeable fillers 'dance little sister' & 'short & curlies' all the more enjoyable. there's also a great reworking of the motown favourite, the temptations' 'ain't too proud to beg'. guy peellaert's fin de siècle sleeve beautifully captures the mood of the times. [polydor](#)

rolling stones : sticky fingers (remastered) '1971's 'sticky fingers' is an acknowledged masterpiece & rightly features on the list of rolling stone magazine's greatest albums of all time. it originally came housed in a "zipper" sleeve conceived by andy warhol & topped the album charts on both sides of the atlantic. pieced together from outtakes & much-laboured-over songs, the record manages to have a loose, ramshackle ambience that belies both its origins & the dark undercurrents of the songs. the us number one single 'brown sugar' has become the ultimate rock anthem but the riffy 'bitch' is just as intoxicating while the ballads 'sister morphine' & 'moonlight mile' are timeless classics. *"with its offhand mixture of decadence, roots music & outright malevolence, 'sticky fingers' set the tone for the rest of the decade for the stones"* 5/5 - amg. [polydor](#)

rolling stones : rolling stones box (remastered) start collecting all 14 remastered studio albums with this unique, limited edition collectors' box set that comes with the first 4 titles – 'sticky fingers', 'goats head soup', 'it's only rock'n roll' & 'black & blue' & has space for the remaining titles. [polydor](#)

jackie leven : the haunted year – spring : man bleeds in glasgow / greetings

from milford (2cd) the 2nd in the reissue series of 8 previously limited edition jackie albums released as double, back to back packages - 2 albums per season. what they said last time : *"a thing of considerable beauty"* – the word, *"this beautifully sequenced album defies the ipod shuffle & listening to it is a cinematically satisfying experience"* 4/5 - sunday times, *"typically brilliant"* – uncut, *"leven has carved out an enviable solo career & this is the latest engrossing instalment...his poetic sensibility & deeply expressive voice are in peerless form throughout...adventurous, ornate & joyfully unpredictable"* 4/5 – daily mirror. [cooking vinyl](#)

the deviants : three re-release of ladbrooke grove counter culture proto-punk band the deviants' final album, 3, originally released in 1969. soon after its release the band broke apart with russell hunter, paul rudolph & duncan sanderson forming the legendary pink fairies, whilst mick farren would record a legendary solo album & continue pursuing his own revolutionary dream. *"3 hangs in a void somewhere between the early edgar broughton band, with whom they enjoyed the wildest rivalry, & the incipient pink fairies, to which all the members bar farren soon fled. culturally, however, it is a brutal reminder of that moment when the '60s dream teetered on the brink of the precipice & the planet went to hell in a handcart around it"* - allmusic. [esoteric](#)

the deviants : disposable 'disposable' was the deviant's 2nd album, originally released in 1968 on the stable imprint & featured the legendary 'lets loot the supermarket'. a musical signpost that would point the direction the deviants offspring the pink fairies would take, this re-mastered edition is long overdue. [esoteric](#)

the deviants : ptooff! 'ptooff!' was the bands classic debut album, originally released in 1967 & only available by mail order from the pages of international times. resplendent in a lavish fold out sleeve & with liner note by john peel, the record caused a sensation, one of the 1st truly independent british rock albums to be released. this edition restores original the artwork & has been re-mastered from the original master tapes. *"a frightening scene, a world in which top 40 pop itself is horribly skewed, & the sound of the deviants grinding out their misshapen r&b classics is the last sound you will hear"* – allmusic. [esoteric](#)

v/a : dr boogie presents cool cats the 4th volume of sub rosa's fundamental collection from dr. boogie, devoted to rare & lost recordings from the '20s to the '60s. this time dr. boogie focuses on the rocketing rise & fast decline of rockabilly from 1954 to 1959. as a trend, rockabilly lasted only a few years but it generated a near-unmatched number of recordings from hundreds of studios from as many american cities & small towns. rockabilly quickly evolved into other forms of rock but the energy, boldness, wildness & talent of these young pioneers, can all be found on this compilation, which rediscovers 26 of these rock adventurers. [sub rosa](#)

the specials : live at the moonlight club this classic live album is re-issued having been unavailable for a long time. this gig was said to have been secretly recorded by decca records who had an office next door to the famous moonlight club in hampstead & then somehow made its way into the hands of the bootleggers. there is no doubting that it captures the band in top form & is a great example of a sound that was to quickly take the nation by storm. recorded on the day before the british general elections of may 1979, the gig is also of significance in that chrysalis a&r employee, roy eldridge, was one of the members of the audience. it was he who was instrumental in signing both the specials & the whole 2 tone apparatus to chrysalis records & the rest, as they say, is history. [emi](#)

roger chapman : hide go seek (2cd) formerly of family, streetwalkers & now, after a 30 year solo career roger returns with a 28 track set of lost gems, demos & alternative recordings of familiar tracks. some tracks are over 21 years old yet still sound fresh & vibrant today. with his barbed wire & wine delivery, 'chappo', as he is affectionately known by his legions of fans, shows no sign of slowing down. [hypertension](#)

jim o'rourke : i'm happy & i'm singing, & a 1,2,3,4 (2cd) you may be familiar with jim o'rourke from his time in sonic youth or his days in gastr del sol or maybe as producer & advisor to latterday wilco or simply for his marvellous solo work from the turn of the century. well hang up your expectations, as this is an entirely different affair. originally released in 2001, this marked a departure from o'rourke's modus operandi. many common folk referred to the record as "jim's laptop record" or his "powerbook" album. equal parts schizoid pop, cracked minimalism, concrete drama & melancholic contemplation, these 3 tracks shimmer softly & drift slowly. it has much in common with the fragility & melancholia of oren ambarchi & is a warm & intimate journey that rewards repeat listens. this long overdue reissue comes with a bonus disc featuring rare & unreleased material from the same period. highly recommended. [editions mego](#)

dance/electronica

v/a : a bugged out! mix by hot chip (2cd) what immaculate taste those hot chip chaps have, you really can't knock 'em, as this excellent bugged out mix proves. being a 2 disc affair, the bugged out disc hits the dancefloor with some class techno & house from the likes of gas, theo parrish, john tejada, prevelist & armando whilst the bugged in disc is a dream house party mix which includes everything from hall & oates, sparks & terence trent d'arby through to the pictish trail, zongamin & hot chip's excellent re-work of gang gang dance's 'house jam'. a class collection, well selected & mixed to perfection. [newstate](#)

miss kittin & the hacker : two (cd & lp) whilst trying to top kitten & the hacker's era-defining 'first' album was never going to be an easy task, here on 'two' they don't sound too fussed about trying to better it, but just come across as two unashamed lovers of electronic pop music getting together to make just that, & doing it rather well too. the hacker has borrowed some sounds from the space disco movement that's as close as anything to being electroclash's spiritual heir, & as you'd expect his production is never anything less than polished & highly competent. meanwhile, miss kitten's vocals are as recognizably deadpan as they ever were. overall a wonderful, stellar sprinkling of metallic soul, glamorous space disco, glossy vocal nuances, crystalline beats & swirling melodies. [nobody's bizzness](#)

caspa : everybody's talking nobody's listening (cd & lp) one of the leading lights of the dubstep scene, finally steps up with his debut. having made his name as a dj on rinse fm & his now legendary fabric mix alongside rusko, he's gone on to be a massively in-demand dj & producer. style-wise, this album is choc-full of brash, ravey dubstep that trawls through all manner of urban styles & low-end variations for the big room massive. proper jump up, with plenty of killer bass & slamming beats plus a few guest mc appearances, make this a surefire party starter & a big album for the scene. one for fans of skream & benga. [sub soldiers](#)

louderbach (troy pierce) : autumn pierce's long awaited 2nd album represents another jump in the evolutionary cycle of minimal techno, having developed from the largely instrumental project that gave us 'enemy love' into a fully-fledged song based outfit. as a result, 'autumn' has a much deeper feel than its predecessor & indeed breaks new ground, with the dark metaphors of gibby miller's often chilling vocal performances fitting hand-in-glove with the ominous landscapes & broken architecture that pierce constructs so effectively. drawing on shared influences such as bauhaus, coil & joy division, the duo have conceived an album of emotional depth & exquisite detail, appropriating the best elements of these early-80s pioneers & reinterpreting them through a contemporary lens to deliver a fine record of minimal-goth-tech! [minus](#)

v/a : tom middleton presents one more tune well, the title kinda gives this one away. legendary producer/dj tom middleton serves up a selection of huge, end-of-night dancefloor fillers. of course, tom's impeccable mixing skills blend these selections to perfection, as well as his re-edits & tweakery of many of the tracks here. includes classics like joe smooth's 'promised land', derrick may's 'strings of life', blu mar ten's 'all over again' & plenty more bonafide anthems as you've never heard them before. [renaissance](#)

zwicker : songs of lucid dreams zwicker represents a new breed of producers from switzerland. having previously lent his programming skills to remixes for the likes of spektrum, minus 8, jamie lloyd & stephan eicher, he now steps up with his debut for the compost label with a slick, electro-pop hybrid that brings to mind artists such as lindstrom, junior boys & prins thomas. the soundscapes here are as organic as electronica can get, warm & welcoming with a multitude of simple layers that never smother the vocalists or indeed the groove at the heart of each track. recommended listening for fans of any of the aforementioned. [compost](#)

burn the negative : in the atmosphere the 4-piece band cite japan, david sylvian, gary numan, sonic youth, bowie, nine inch nails & a dozen others as holding key spots in their music collections & these influences can certainly be heard in their debut but they are far dancier & beatier than these references suggest. the carlisle lads exemplify this decade's fusing of electronica with guitar pop, sounding like an electro version of white lies. it's a concoction of energetic trashy disco blended with electro beats, new romantic rhythms & the spirit of 70's punk, 80's rock & 90's house. "art-disco inferno" – guardian, "saviours of new wave electronica punk funk" – dj mag. [gung ho](#)

the black dog : further vexations true pioneers & legends of the uk techno & electronica scene, the black dog return with an album that sees them gravitating ever more towards the dancefloor with a sound that twitches with deep techno rhythms & electronic flourishes for which the trio are known for. in keeping with the album's theme of cctv scrutiny & public paranoia, the music here is dark & twisted, but still melodic enough to satisfy fans of classic idm or the 'artificial intelligence'-era warp sound. "this mainly continues their winning streak, its elegiac melodies & clean lines belying not only dancefloor muscle, but darkly emotional weight" – the wire. "a well realised album that fans of darkside techno electronica & sharpened techno will find a lot to revel in. very highly recommended" – boomkat. [soma](#)

jon hopkins : insides hopkins is a musical shapeshifter : a composer, pianist & a self-taught studio wizard. he makes big, bold electronic music using walls of synths, twinkling melodies & amorphous bass rumbles. as such his previous works have seen him labelled by brian eno as "an electronic innovator" while an impressive sweep of artists from herbie hancock to david holmes, king creosote & coldplay have called upon the 28-year-old londoner's handiwork as a producer & composer. 'insides' is a stunning slice of electronica that is in turns both abrasive & tender, beautiful & dark. there's plenty of acoustic instruments which lend an organic feel to the record. think four tet or ulrich schnauss meets autechre with huge melodies, this comes highly recommended. "the fact that it comes from someone who understands music in a deeper & more personal way than most in this genre is what makes insides stand out from the rest" – daily music guide. [double six](#)

florian hecker : acid in the style of david tudor this is hecker's 1st full length studio album since 2003's groundbreaking 'sun pandemonium'. the album references the parallel universes of modern 20th century composition & hedonistic rave culture resulting in a challenging but ultimately rewarding set of electronic compositions which push these 2 reference points into unknown areas. put simply, this is extreme sound manipulation that should be listened to at high volume & is definitely not for the faint hearted. "one of the most intense, overwhelming & daring listening experiences ever? we think so" – boomkat. [editions mego](#)

dj hell : teufelswerk (2cd) the international deejay gigolo returns with his 4th album, this time featuring an impressive array of guests counting the likes of bryan ferry, p.diddy, christian prommer & peter kruder amongst its numbers. being a double disc affair, the album is split into 2 distinct halves, with the 'night' disc delving into menacing chicago/detroit influenced house, techno & electro, whilst the 'day' disc deals with classic electronic music of the late '60s & early '70's, showing shades of the likes of morton subotnick, bernard fevre & kraftwerk, with a journey-length synth progression, various blips & no bass whatsoever. a solid album that successfully crosses both up & down tempo territories. [international deejay gigolo](#)

kotchy : 89 kotchy is the hotly-tipped sound alchemist whose quirky blend of club-savvy soul pop, house, hip-hop & rock is earning him a lot of respect in underground circles. his music is hard to categorise, touching on so many different styles that it's understandable why he's being named in the same breath as of prince, pharrell & beck, as like them he's not scared to break the boundaries of what pop music can be. an album in the truest sense, '89' is cleverly constructed to be more than just a collection of songs, deceptively paced & full of rewarding discoveries, it will take a week of repeat listens to get familiar with everything that sparkles here, but kotchy's infectious brilliance as a studio musician & arranger makes that prospect entirely welcome. "meet the angst-ridden anti-pharrell... like prince with a hard-on for static-swathed glitch-pop" – nme. "file next to andre 3000, flying lotus, arthur russell, hercules & love affair" – guardian. [civil music](#)

damian lazarus : smoke the monster out lazarus made his name predominantly as a dj & label owner, founding the excellent crosstown rebels imprint, helping shape the sound of contemporary techno in the process. now he's made the bold move of stepping out from behind the turntables to produce this, his debut album. given his credentials, one might expect a pumping, dancefloor-aimed beast, however whilst lazarus does borrow elements from techno & house, this record is really a song-based affair, full of unusual acoustic instrumentation & delicately wrought arrangements which he wrote with collaborator arthur jeffes, son of the penguin café orchestra's simon jeffes. surprisingly, lazarus himself sings on several of the tracks, investing his songs with his own distinct personality & quiet expressiveness. a strange & wonderfully quirky journey into lazarus' mind. "love it" – id, "inventive, deviant & uncompromising" – dazed & confused. [get physical](#)

high contrast : high contrast confidential

(2cd) high contrast has managed to establish himself as one of the most commercial, biggest selling drum n' bass artists around, with a sound that is always uplifting & accessible. perhaps testament to this is his list of remix credentials which includes adele, the streets, eric prydz, missy elliott, basement jaxx & a whole lot more, all of which appear on this 'best of'-style collection, alongside some of his own dancefloor destroying classics. lively & catchy as swine flu, this will make any dancefloor get ill. [hospital](#)

fischerspooner : entertainment

the kings of electroclash & outrageous wardrobes return with a new album, this time hooking up with producer jeff saltzman (the kills, black dice, sounds) as well as working with steve stein (aka the latter part of proto mash-up merchants double dee & steinski). stylistically the album is as diverse as it is cohesive. there are 'electro' dance moves on the album but also the swirling electronic psychedelia of 'amuse bouche' full of surprise flavours. elsewhere you'll find the searing guitars of 'we are electric', the downtempo euro wiggle of 'danse en france' & the rock pop gem 'to the moon' which very nearly takes you there with it's pounding drums, soaring harmonies & pulsing organ. [lo](#)

v/a : mezzanine de l'alcazar vol 7

(2cd) ultra hip parisian restaurant mezzanine de l'alcazar serve up another appetising mix of chic downtempo & seductive grooves, handily split into 2 discs, 1 called 'food', presumably to accompany your nosh, & the other entitled 'dance', clearly to jump about to & work off all that foie gras. so now you can feel all sophisticated & continental whilst munching your beans on toast to the likes of flevans, gwen mccrae, booka shade, jimpster & fujiya & miyagi & then dance it all off to ananda project, chocolate puma, king unique & hercules & love affair. bon appetit! [defected](#)

telemusic le disco : telemusic remixed

(2cd) having given us le discotheque (both the word & the idea), the french were no slouches when it came to arming the disco explosion. in 1979 the cream of french & british session musicians gathered to record some of the most scorching disco ever committed to vinyl. as a series of 'disco & co' albums on the tele music library label, this ended up as radio talk-show sound-beds & backing music for car chases on french cop shows. as a service to these rare-as-heck productions, dj history has unearthed the original tapes & recruited an all-star cast of splicing fingers – the unabombers, ray mang, the idjut boys, leo zero, mudd, al kent, faze action, mudd & toby tobias – to polish them up for today's dancefloors. fans of classic disco & the nu-balearic movement should check this out. [dj history](#)

stonephace : stonephace

take the guitar of portishead's adrian utley, the bass of jim barr, the saxophone of project coordinator & working weekend founder larry stabbins, & cornish noise monger krysztok oktalski, condense it all into gritty, funky, psyched-up nu-jazz form & slap a name on it, instant gold. choice hip-hop beats abound throughout this debut record, nurturing opium den grooves & wild soloing, including an exploration of trumpet by guy barker (dizzy gillespie). this a heavyweight collaboration that brings to mind the weird jazz & hip hop experiments of artists such as madlib & heliocentrics. good to hear tru thoughts doing something a little different, indeed its possibly the best thing they've released in quite some time. "startlingly good" – the independent. [tru thoughts](#)

talvin singh : calcutta cyber cafe - drum & space

originally released back in 1996, this was the debut album from uk asian underground legend talvin singh & has been long out of print. comprising of just 2 long tracks, it's a classic fusion of indian classical music with the rising drum & bass sound of the time, the result of which laid the blueprint for the sound known as 'asian underground'. with talvin singh making a long awaited return with a new album this year, this is a good stop gap until then. [chilly media](#)

hip hop

lil wayne & birdman : happy fathers day

lil wayne, the self-proclaimed best rapper alive, & birdman, his father figure turned business partner, bring a texture that's both weathered & slyly amused, for a glimmer of new orleans r&b. their delivery is regularly changed, & seems to borrow from jamaican dancehall inflections, landing syllables on unlikely beats, as they keep the listener on their toes. with wayne's unstoppable flow, & birdman's veteran skills, this album is a must have for any lil wayne fan. they're all about the snap of a crisp drum-machine snare & the hook of a sweet chorus, & it shows within 'happy father's day'. [modulor](#)

lil wayne : dedication 3

amidst speculation that lil wayne & mixtape king dj drama might no longer work together to put out what is one of the most sought after & bestselling street album series, 'dedication', brace yourself for the unleashing of 'dedication 3'. like it's predecessors, this one's chock full of tracks from weezy f. baby, as well as contributions from his whole click, the young money family. lil wayne knocks this one outta the park. [modulor](#)

soul

sugar pie desanto : go go power 1961-1966

a much-needed look at the mighty sugar pie desanto, a singer who really rocked chess records back in the 60s. desanto came to the label already boasting one hell of a groove, a rock-solid sense of rhythm & a raw vocal power that easily rivalled, if not beat, that of etta james, her labelmate at chess & partner on a few duets here. the collection's a non-stop soul party with upbeat northern soul & plenty of deep soul elements as well. it's the first time many of these cuts have been brought together on cd. as ever kent serves up some great notes & vintage photos with the package. [ace](#)

v/a : goldwax northern soul northern soul from a surprising source & a killer batch of rare material from the mighty memphis powerhouse of soul. goldwax is probably best known for its deep soul work, most famously with james carr, but in the mid 60s the label cut some killer grooves that really match the vibe that was coming out of detroit or philadelphia at the time - upbeat, uptempo singles that bristle with energy, yet also have some of the deeper tones you might expect from the label. some tunes have a bit of a memphis sound, depending on the singer, but the rhythms & production mostly recall modes from up north, & offer up a really surprising new chapter of a great label. includes tracks by dorothy williams, percy milems, james carrs, george jackson, dan greer, the ovations & spencer wiggins. [ace](#)

v/a : the complete goldwax singles vol.1 1962-1966 (2cd) the first of 3 2cd sets that will, between them, reissue the a- & b-sides of every single released by revered memphis label goldwax records & its subsidiary labels between 1963 & 1971. goldwax remains one of the pivotal labels of the era, introducing the world to artists of the calibre of ov wright, james carr & the ovations but goldwax also recorded & issued first-rate country, blues & garage rock, as will be heard during the course of this series. many of the tracks featured across this & future volumes will be receiving their first-ever cd issue. the project has been endorsed by goldwax founder quinton claunch, who has also provided reminiscences of several of the more obscure artists that are featured. a great round-up of one of the most important southern soul imprints of the 60s. [ace](#)

v/a : locked in the vinyl cellar - joey negro joey negro's been locked in the vinyl cellar a long time collecting rare disco sides for many many years, a good deal of which have gone onto influence his own music. this killer set brings together grooves from joey's massive record collection - a few familiar classics, & a lot of rare numbers, filled with plenty of soul, & served up in a variety of styles from the end of the 70s & start of the 80s. includes cuts from heatwave, mohjah, loose change, the maniacs & more. proper disco fever! [z](#)

v/a : 100 soul classics (4cd) a great compilation that rounds up classics from the atlantic soul vaults, spanning roughly 25 years from 1959-1976. listening to the 100 songs here it becomes obvious that atlantic records played a crucial role in introducing some of the most significant & influential african-american musicians of the 20th century to the public. without the talent-spotting abilities & impeccable musical taste of ahmet ertegun & his production staff, the world probably wouldn't have got to hear the awe-inspiring voices of ray charles, solomon burke, wilson pickett, sam & dave, otis redding, aretha franklin & donny hathaway. [rhino](#)

v/a : contemporary funk a great compilation drawing together the best underground artists who are pushing the new funk sound of now. the funk on this compilation is contemporary but the message is as old as humanity itself. funk is a vibrant & viable music that was born from a transformative period in american history - the sound of the growing pains of a young country. 'contemporary funk' gathers inspired bands from today whose hearts still beat for funk's timeless truth, & connects them with this rich legacy of american music. artists here include the fantastics, the funk revolution, mauri bailey, the nepolitans, ben martin trio & more, all serving up raw, dancefloor funk that can't fail to bring a smile to the face. [boombox](#)

jazz

led bib : sensible shoes the 4th album by this london quintet of dual saxes, keyboards, bass & drums. it is a cataclysmic offering of free-jazz, jazz-rock, avant-skronk, funk-rock, noise-metal & whatever else they can lay their hands on. 'sensible shoes' carves out twisted new territory for the band & collects 9 explosive tracks wired together by striking group interaction. definitely ones or fans of the noisier end of polar bear / acoustic ladyland / fulborn teversham. "if you don't go near jazz because it just isn't damned noisy enough & seems to have petered out after the pre-punk free jazz ideological furies of the 60s & 70s, then try led bib...led bib sound like they could have coped supporting '61 sun ra, '66 beefheart & even '69 led zep" - omm, "sun ra didn't die in vain" - the times, "gritty, raunchy jazz from a group who deserve to be checked out" - the wire. [cuneiform](#)

get the blessing : bugs in amber featuring members of portishead, get the blessing (formerly the blessing) return with the follow up to their debut 'all is yes', winner of the bbc jazz award for album of the year 2008. they are noisier, thrashier & less conventional than ever. tied to jazz by its freedom & spirit but with a punk attitude, rock energy & beats driven by a foundation in dance, they walk a thin line but rather than pushing people away they have managed to draw them into their quirky "post-jazz" clique. keeping their trademark patchwork of catchy hooks & free improvisation, this record defines the shape of jazz to come. "an intimate epic...a low-budget bond movie remade by tarkovsky & starring buster keaton" - jim barr. [cake/candid](#)

art tatum / ben webster quartet : art tatum & ben webster quartet the only existing collaboration between art tatum & ben webster apart from a 1944 radio broadcast. this lone studio session in sept 1956 produced a selection of the wonderful standard ballads that both men loved to play. considered a true landmark in recorded jazz history, it was to be tatum's last studio session ever. the players are : art tatum, piano ; ben webster, tenor sax ; red callender, bass ; bill douglass, drums. includes as bonus tracks the quartet session with teddy wilson on piano & a tatum solo. [jazz beat](#)

marc sinan/julia hülsmann : fasil an inspired song cycle & a fascinating transcendental project devised by the outstanding guitarist marc sinan. 'fasil' features serbia-born vocalist yelena kuljić, "the most thrilling new voice in the current jazz scene". it's a character study of aisha, the great love & youngest wife of the prophet mohammed, with music by pianist julia hülsmann & words by writer marc schiffer. [ecm](#)

vassilis tsabropoulos : the promise an album of exquisite beauty featuring 11 melodious piano miniatures by the versatile greek pianist – all but 1, a traditional hellenic tune, written by himself. its serene calm evokes the oriental flavours reminiscent of medieval religious music from the byzantine world he championed on 'akroasis' & on his international bestseller with cellist anja lechner, 'chants hymns & dances'. [ecm](#)

jazzmob : flashback on their 4th jazzaway label album, jazzmob steps out as a powerful, grooving & hard swinging live outfit that will satisfy not only the traditional fan of contemporary jazz but also listeners that are into the exciting mix of acoustic/electric sounds by artists like sun ra, ornette coleman, jimi hendrix, miles davis, frank zappa & john coltrane. jazzmob is led by alto sax player & jazzaway label founder, jon klette, with anders aarum (keyboards), gisle johansen (tenor sax), kåre nymark (trumpet), per zanussi (bass) & andreas bye (drums). recorded live at molde international jazz festival 2006, the rhythm section are a force of nature & the horns lock in tight at the right places without losing the free spirit that is one of their trademarks. [jazzaway](#)

joe lovano us five : folk art joe lovano formed a new band that he calls us five to record 'folk art', his 22nd effort for blue note. in the liberated spirit of 1960s avant-garde & 1970s loft scenes - featuring rising stars esperanza spalding on bass, francisco mela & otis brown iii on drums & percussion & james weidman on piano - this is joe's 1st album of all original compositions, mixing his native-tongue free jazz elasticity with nuanced latin grooves & meditative lyricism. the recording captures the edge-of-the-seat group interaction of us five as the band intuitively interprets lovano's compositions in a loose & joyous way. [blue note](#)

terry callier : about time - the terry callier story 1964-1980 for reasons of inter-label politics & such like, there has never been a compilation of terry's classic era recordings from prestige, cadet & elektra, until now. 'about time' brings together some of his finest tracks – for all of them you really need to invest in every single one of his albums – & also has a few firsts. it is the 1st time that the b-side of his debut single, an early version of 'you're going to miss your candyman' has been reissued, which is quite useful as it's a-side is a northern soul smash that now sells for around £400. it is also the 1st time that you have been able to buy both sides of terry's final single on one cd. however perhaps most significantly, bgp have found an unreleased track, a folk-funk epic that is every bit as good as the rest of terry's cadet recordings. a true winner. [ace](#)

fly : sky & country the 2nd record from the adventurous collective comprised of 3 influential american jazz musicians : mark turner, tenor & soprano saxophones; larry grenadier, double-bass & jeff ballard, drums. it extends the trio's essential blueprint - group jazz stripped of ego, honouring the compositions - sax & bass moving in complementary orbits, drums actively detailing rhythm & groove. all 3 players write music for the group. turner & grenadier have recently received much positive press for their contribution to enrico rava's 'new york days'. grenadier & jeff ballard are also well-known as 2/3s of the brad mehldau trio & half of the metheny/mehldau quartet. "*music that expands & contracts effortlessly & dramatically & that balances the cerebral components of group improvisation with the more gut-level elements of groove*" – [jazztimes](#). [ecm](#)

pat metheny : one quiet night originally released in 2003, this is the guitarist's most simply executed & highly personal set. the night in question was november 24, 2001 at the home studio in metheny's apartment. he began to play around with a new baritone guitar he had just acquired, exploring what he has described as an unusual "low nashville tuning". "i wasn't thinking about anything other than the sound of one note leading me to the next. that i had my wits about me to push record & document this experiment was a serendipitous occurrence" – metheny. one of his fastest selling & most critically hailed records - a timeless work. "*a spare, almost reverent session of man & guitar*" – [boston globe](#), "*an earphone listen reveals the spiritual-like ruminations as well as a relaxed & chiming sense of unadorned, heartfelt beauty*" – [downbeat](#). [nonesuch](#)

blues

sonny landreth : levee town (2cd) sonny's magnificent & star-studded album from 2000, gets a welcome re-issue, this time with a bonus cd containing 5 previously unreleased tracks. 'levee town' not only combines his poetry & phenomenal slide guitar playing but also features the talents of special guests john hiatt & bonnie raitt. landreth is a one-of-a-kind slide guitarist - his unique zydeco/ blues/swamp-rock style has allowed him to collaborate with artists as diverse as cliffon chenier, mountain & mark knopfler. sonny's talent has been compared to some masterful contemporaries such as ry cooder & david lindley & on 'levee town', he reaches the pinnacle of his career. an amazing musical & poetic tale of life in louisiana. [proper](#)

folk

trembling bells : carbeth (cd & lp) this hotly-tipped new nu-folk outfit are masterminded by protean drummer alex neilson who has accompanied bonnie 'prince' billy, alasdair roberts & six organs of admittance amongst others & features the diverse musical talents of medieval music scholar & psychedelic siren, lavinia blackwall. a fine pedigree i think we can all agree! neilson seeks with trembling bells to "reanimate the hidden, mythic landscapes of yorkshire & glasgow (in particular)". like their forebears fairport convention, incredible string band, pentangle & comus, traditional british folk collides with more modern musical styles in an engaging & coherent manner giving it new & relevant dimensions to the modern world. recommended. [honest jon's](#)

roy bailey : below the radar

roy bailey's new cd is a collection of songs showcasing one of the finest voices in the folk world & an assembly of some of its finest musicians. familiar characters such as accordion player john kirkpatrick, guitarist (& son-in-law) martin simpson & bass players andy cutting are on the album & there are collaborations with donald grant (fiddle), andy seward (bass) & david ferrard & kellie while (vocals). *"the very soul of folk's working class ideals... a triumphal homage to the grass roots folk scene as a radical alternative to the mainstream music industry"* – [mojo](#). [fuse](#)

steve knightley : track of words –retraced

a decade on, show of hands' inspired frontman revamps his first mainstream-nudging solo album, emphatically demonstrating the sheer diversity of his acclaimed songwriting. leading on from his stunningly sparse solo album 'cruel river' (2007), 'track of words-retraced' is undoubtedly his most emotionally literate collection of songs to date. it comprises 13 songs & a bonus track co-written with fellow devon folk star seth lakeman. perhaps more than any other album, it demonstrates the sheer diversity of knightley's finely-honed songwriting & cogent lyrics, stripping away the bigger production feel of the original album & investing in a more subtle, acoustic & occasionally retro style, adding new tempos, textures & unexpected instrumentation. [hands on](#)

oysterband : the oxford girl & other stories

oysterband revisit 14 classic songs from all periods of their career in their present dynamic acoustic style to celebrate their 30th anniversary. this is not a studio album of new songs. instead, it's a set of all-new acoustic recordings of some favourite songs, both self-written & traditional, rearranged (& in some cases reinvented) for now. what they have in common is that the band felt it had something new to say about them. the recordings have been done as simply & directly as possible, with voices, harmony singing & acoustic instruments to the fore, as they started out. [running man](#)

country

devon sproule : don't hurry for heaven

virginia's devon sproule returns, backed by her fantastically tight band & produced by her husband, the formidable guitarist & songwriter paul curreri. the record features the pedal-steel of the legendary bj cole & a cameo appearance from jesse winchester, a fellow southerner & hero of sproule's. sproule's effortless delivery of a deceptively complex melody & her charming guitar work, emit an enthralling vitality. *"the writing is always engaging & the arrangements exquisite. for those who had time for mary margaret & rickie lee, make some more for devon"* – *the independent*, *"like its predecessor, this one has that warm & natural, relaxed, open sound where everything breezes into its place...up there with an all-time classic like the mcgarrigles' debut"* – *froots*. [tin angel](#)

hot club of cowtown : wishful thinking

the first studio album since 2002, featuring all original members : elana james (violin & vocals), whit smith (guitar & vocals) & jake erwin (bass & background vocals). they draw on musical influences from gypsy music to rags, to the hot club of france & western swing & come up with a contemporary sound. all in all it is classic hot club. a whole bunch of originals are joined by covers from the likes of hoagy carmichael, bob wills & tom waits. their sound has been augmented with drums courtesy of damien llanes. [proper](#)

michael weston king : crawling through the usa

new live album, recorded during his 2008 tour of america. this recording includes 3 brand new songs & a previously unreleased cover of the townes van zandt song 'marie'. widely acknowledged as one of britain's finest singer songwriters, mwk draws his influence from a wide range of styles including pop, folk, soul, country & gospel. he is the former leader of u.k. alt country pioneers the good sons, with whom he made 4 critically acclaimed albums in a 7 year career. for the past 8 years he has been a solo troubadour, performing with the likes of nick cave, john cale, roger mcguinn, steve earle, guy clark, ron sexsmith, steve forbert, son volt & releasing 5 beautiful albums along the way. [valve](#)

steff nevers : closest to my heart

the norwegian country singer has been referred to as being a breath of fresh air in the european country music arena. he is lead vocal & he plays guitar, dobro & banjo but he also has a top quality band behind him. raw countryrock with bbq sauce & kick ass guitar twang. [ims](#)

world

lhasa : lhasa

5 years after the release of 'the living road,' the album that won her a bbc world music award, lhasa is back with a new offering. written entirely in english & produced by lhasa herself (she collaborated with patrick watson, freddy koella & sarah pagé on the music of some songs), recorded entirely to tape, her 3rd album feels like a singer, songwriter, arranger, & producer coming into her own. the instrumentation is simple yet unusual - harp, guitar, pedal steel, bass, drums, piano. the melodies are familiar & irresistible, yet totally original. the lyrics are written in a strikingly transparent & image-laden english. the style draws from country, gospel, blues & folk, & manages to feel ancient without a hint of nostalgia, & modern without a drop of technological wizardry. *"a reminder that lhasa is still a unique performer"* – *the guardian*. [woj](#)

mamane barka : introducing mamane barka

as a nomad of the toubou tribe, malam mamane barka is the indisputable son of the desert & the world's only remaining master of the biram – the sacred five-stringed harp from niger. he maintains the tradition single-handedly, bringing the boatshaped instrument to the world's attention with his own unique & innovative blend of desert blues. the songs mix traditional material along with some of barka's own socially conscious compositions. [world music network](#)

el tambura : friends of bamboute - 20th anniversary edition veteran egyptian musicians el tanbura, a collective of veteran master musicians, singers, fishermen & sufi philosophers, celebrate their 20th anniversary with songs from old-time cafes & hashish dens along the path of the suez canal. custodians to some of egypt's oldest folk melodies, the band's music is driven by the seductive call of the simsimiyya – an ancient lyre dating back to the times of the pharaohs, which according to legend, is said to enchant those who hear her strings. the disc recounts both tales of the 19th century bambutiyya merchants who frequented the establishments along the path of the suez canal, & devotional sufi songs from the egyptian delta. [30 ips](#)

mohamed ilyas & nyota zameremeta orchestra of zanzibar : taarab zanzibar, the spice island, is where africa meets the arab world & this is reflected in the string-laden music called taarab. at its heart taarab is about the entrancement of the singer. mohamed ilyas, "the voice of zanzibar", is the last of a long line of great singers, able to entrance audiences with his rich, expressive voice. this is a full-blown production recorded at the magnificent sauti za zanzibar studio by the 16 piece nyota zameremeta orchestra of zanzibar, led by strings, ouds & the glorious zither-like sounds of the many-stringed qanun. a musical & lyrical storm, it incorporates the strong percussive elements of the african influence with the powerful strings from the egyptian roots of the music & combines both cultures in the spontaneous, relaxed, melodic vocals. [chiku-taku](#)

baka beyond : baka beyond the forest if you have never heard baka beyond before prepare for something of unique & unusual beauty. at night time the baka pygmy women perform powerful ritual singing ("yelli") to ensure a successful hunt, as they have for 1000 years. this haunting, mystical singing was recorded on a solar-powered 8-track machine in the middle of the cameroon rainforest. back in the uk, baka beyond leader martin cradick deconstructed the original interwoven vocal lines & replaced some voices with bass & acoustic guitar. the result is a stunningly beautiful, other-worldly album. [march hare music](#)

reggae

v/a : evolution of dub vol 2 - the great leap forward (4cd) the 2nd in a series of boxsets spotlighting key moments in the evolution of dub. box 2 continues the focus on the roots of dub, bringing together 4 foundation classics from the golden age of version – 3 longtime classic sets from bunny lee – tommy mccoock, the aggrovators & the revolutionaries plus niney the observer's legendary sledgehammer dub. 4 original albums in reproduction card sleeves collected together in themed box including a booklet featuring classic photos & images along with sleeve notes by reggae historian noel hawkes. [greensleeves](#)

laurel aitken : ...says fire widely acclaimed as both the godfather of ska & the high priest of reggae, laurel aitkens influence upon the modern jamaican music industry is nothing short of profound. after becoming the islands first major recording star, he relocated to the uk in 1960 where he proved instrumental in making ska an international phenomenon. 1969 proved a crucial year in the development of jamaican music. reggae had just superseded rock steady in becoming the islands national sound. so it was in such an environment that leading independent doctor bird records released this, laurel aitkens long awaited 2nd album, a collection comprised of his most popular singles from the preceding months along with previously unreleased material. this reissue includes an additional 10 tracks! [pressure drop](#)

frankie paul : reggae legends frankie paul is one of jamaica's best-loved & most popular reggae artists, almost blind from childhood he is known as 'the jamaican stevie wonder'. this box collects 4 quality sets - 3 classic sets recorded for top producers henry 'junjo' lawes, king jammy & colin sampson plus the in-demand never before on cd 'double trouble' spotlighting frankie paul in classic showcase style with the great michael palmer. four original albums collected together in reproduction sleeves giving an extensive overview of frankie paul's successful hit-making career. [greensleeves](#)

johnny clarke : jah jah we pray johnny clarke ruled the dancehall in the mid 70's, using the cleaver 'flyers rhythms' that gave some of his tunes an edge with the sound systems. this cd selects some of the most memorable cuts from his 1970's heyday. entirely produced by bunny lee, it features some of jamaica's finest including sly dunbar, earl 'chinna' smith, aston 'family man' barrett & tommy mccoock. [kingston sounds](#)

vinyl

kurt vile : constant hitmaker philadelphian one-man band kurt vile (also of shop favourites, war on drugs) kicks off this excellent record with a lo-fi pop anthem : 'freeway' is a simple enough guitar & drum machine affair but there's a raw, energetic romanticism that instantly taps into the tropes of great americana songwriters & the fact that this is all strung together in a punky, diy setting only serves to make the record more effective & heartstring-tugging. it's by no means all-out pop though - you'll find weird sketchy pieces that sound like the emissions of some far out supermarket synth drones, like some freakish combination of ariel pink & atlas sound. completely lo-fi & unfocused but not without considerable pop melody & structure. essentially it's like a listening to war on drugs, pre-production, on a dodgy cassette player. awesome! [woodsist](#)

v/a : untitled ep (limited 12") this ep features 4 live improvised tracks by the bands skill 7 stamina 12, same things (featuring dj scotch egg & members of charlottefield & the go team) & toilet. comes with hand-printed sleeves commemorating the arrests of james brown & nick nolte. side a 1. skill 7 stamina 12 - 'trinity square car park, 1974' (4:28), 2. skill 7 stamina 12 - 'amy winehouse's lack of personal hygiene' (6:51), side b 1. same things 'toothache' (8:53), 2. toilet - 'toilet 2' (7:55). [junior aspirin](#)

wipers : over the edge the bleak, hard-driven 3rd lp by the wipers (originally released in 1983) offers greg sage at his most chased & breathless, lashing out with sharp staccato notes as if melody were his only defense. while their debut lp provided the blueprint for grunge & their 2nd album recast the band as one of america's premier post-punk bands, it's 'over the edge' that best exemplifies their sound. the jagged, effortless guitar lines, the paranoid lyrics & raw-throated vocals & the taut, unified rhythms that define their sound bleed together most clearly on this lp. one of the most passionate & influential punk records ever. [jackpot](#)

sigur ros : von (limited dmm reissue in a lavish gatefold sleeve with a special purple plastic wallet) sigur rós' debut album is finally available on vinyl for the 1st time. though darker & more fractured than the string-laden nooks of the follow-up, the now classic 'ágætis byrjun', it's just as sprawling & outright bombastic. it's remarkable that such a young band would be this experimental at this stage in their lifespan, veering from gavin bryars-style aquatic minimalism to my bloody valentine-style dream pop. varying states of isolationist ambience run throughout, whether evoking unrest or tranquil rest. on overlooked but essential record. [fat cat](#)

art brut : art brut vs satan (import) [cargo germany](#)

marissa nadler : little hells [kemado](#)

d v d

v/a : dubfiles - dubstep documentary (dvd+cd) the first dvd dubstep documentary which takes a look inside the world of dubstep's most prolific djs, mcs & producers. contains detailed & personal interviews with the scene's top players, examining their likes & dislikes, roots, influences & production tips. features caspa, quietstorm, benga, skream, slaughter mob, distance, joe nice, search & destroy, n-type, d1, rusko, hatcha, crazy d & pinch. the 2 hour dvd is accompanied by a 10 track cd featuring caspa, d1, dubchild, quiet storm, search & destroy, pinch, benga, skream, rusko & n-type, including several previously-unreleased tunes. [dubfiles](#)

s i n g l e s

single of the week

burial & four tet : moth/wolf cub 12" [text](#)

the leisure society : last of the melting snow / a matter of time v.limited 7". [willkommen](#)

scout niblett : it's time' / 'my beloved very limited 7". [drag city](#)

pinch : attack of the giant killer robot spiders 12". [planet mu](#)

poppy & the jezebels : rhubarb & custard 7" [mute](#)

ital tek : massive error ep 12". [planet mu](#)

maximo park : the kids are sick again 2 x 7" & cd. [warp](#)

future islands : feathers & hallways 7". [upset the rhythm](#)

the brownies : cougar 7". [nr one](#)

fanfarlo : drowning men 7". [moshi moshi](#)

we were promised jetpacks : quiet little voices 7". [fat cat](#)

joey casio : share the cup 7". [k records](#)

rye rye ft m.i.a. : bang 12". [interscope](#)

brakes : don't take me to space (man) limited 7". [fat cat](#)

friendship : the graveyard shift limited, numbered 7" & dvd. [too pure](#)

she & him : why do you let me stay here? 7". [double six records](#)

betty & the werewolves : david cassidy limited 7". [damaged goods](#)

la roux : in for the kill (lifelike remix) 12". [kitsune](#)

crayon fields : voice of paradise limited 7". [the passport label](#)

allesi's ark : over the hill 7". [virgin](#)

the juan maclean : one day 12". [dfa](#)

momotte feat. laetitia sadier : e.p. 7". [2000 records](#)

u2 : magnificent limited 7". [mercury](#)