

out this week.....

album of the week

the soft pack : the soft pack

(comes with a very limited free tote bag & badge set, while they last) previously known as the muslims but opting to rename themselves after a type of flaccid dildo instead, the san diego 4-piece present one of the best rock-garage-psyche-pop-punk debuts we've heard in recent times (although, strictly speaking, this is the band's 2nd album, following their vinyl only album, under their previous name). their raw, insistent, thrashy, sloppy sound recalls the heyday of college rock, due in no small part to the production work of eli janney, former bassist of cult 90's chicago band girls against boys. mining the guitar/vocal harmony pop-punk of the ramones, the replacements, early rem & wire, they sound like the strokes doing garage & it works bloody brilliantly. if you thought you were done with the dirgy lo-fi output of preppy american bands, you won't want to be giving up on 'em just yet – with sparse guitar lines, factory records stylings, punk energy & exceptional knack for hooky tunes, this one's a winner. *"it's done brilliantly, with no frills, no ego, no sense of homage (just some damn fine influences), no bullshit...something special"* - dis, *"justifies all that enthusiastic frothing...fucking ace"* -artrocker. [heavenly](#)

rock/indie/psych/kraut

midlake : the courage of others

(cd / limited lp) one of bella union's most successful & celebrated acts make their long-awaited return with their extraordinary 3rd album. you'll be relieved to know that the texas quintet have made yet another beautiful body of work which is undoubtedly best appreciated as a whole, in the old-fashioned sense of an album (which makes perfect sense considering midlake linchpin tim smith's fondness for the look & feel of past times). whereas 2006's 'trials of van occupanther' was in part inspired by the soft(er) rock of the early-to-mid 1970s – from neil young & america to fleetwood mac – this one looks to a slightly earlier & definitely british, trad-tainted folk sound. it may share the same gorgeously analogue-warm electro-acoustic template as 'van occupanther' but it's a slower, darker & more carved record, both eerier & dreamier & as such, is likely to be much loved by fans of everyone from fairport convention, steeleye span & jethrotull to their modern day equivalents espers & six organs of admittance. 4/5 - *album of the month, mojo*. [bella union](#)

los campesinos! : romance is boring

(limited cd) the lively indie-pop 7 piece administer another injection of sugar for the energy depleted. this spasming, frenetic, rush of an album sees the welsh yelpers build on the promise of last year's mini album 'we are beautiful, we are doomed', whereby they up the nervous adrenaline. produced by john goodmanson (sleater-kinney, bikini kill, wu-tang clan), it's a record that's bigger, deeper, more complex & more direct than anything they have recorded to date. employing far wider instrumentation than previously, it's been filled out with brass, strings, drum machines & electronics. it's also packed with guest spots from the likes of jamie stewart of xiu xiu, zac pennington of parenthetical girls & jherik bischoff of the dead science, making this nothing if not ambitious. [wichita](#)

husky rescue : ship of light

'ship of light' is the follow up to the critically acclaimed 'country falls' & 'ghost is not real' & like its predecessors is a fine example of the undeniably scandinavian combination of blissful warmth & detached iciness. the vocals of reeta-leena korhola recall emiliana torrini at her chilliest & these sit against the warm synthetic pop tones provided by songwriter/producer marko nyberg. the overall feeling is akin to coming in out of the cold & can't fail to warm you up! 'ship of light' demonstrates husky rescue can write gorgeous pop songs just as well as the more ambient tracks found on earlier works. *"no music on earth distils the nordic experience better than husky rescue's"* 4/5 - *mojo*, *"the kind of adult pop that air were promising us with their first album, before they were sidetracked"* - *guardian*. [catskills records](#)

first aid kit : the big black & the blue

prodigious swedish teenagers klara (16) & johanna söderberg (19) have been gathering fans apace since the release of their 'drunken trees' ep in 2009. originally released on the knife's rabid label, the duo was swiftly picked up for the uk by wichita, who now unveil the glorious debut full length. you'll soon find yourself enraptured by the sweeping majesty & almost telekinetic, intricate weaving of their voices, sounding like the dreamy & spectral nieces of the indigo girls or michelle shocked coming in from the campfire to settle at the stockholm kitchen table. their country-tinged pop belies their years & the songs seep under the skin & claw at you. surface playfulness is deceiving as the tracks take on a darker hue in places, but both elements work perfectly together to create a trance-like quality. for fans of alela diane, emmy the great & jenny lewis. *"gorgeous melodies & heart-melting harmonies"* - *nme*. [wichita recordings](#)

chew lips : unicorn

(comes with an exclusive remix bonus disc) it would be easy, almost too easy, to categorise chew lips as electro pop. the temptation would certainly be there – two guys (james watkins & will sanderson) on all manner of synths & keyboards. one girl, the superlatively monikered & golden throated frontwoman figs. it would be easy but all too wrong. their debut is pop, no doubt about it, but it's quirkier & more idiosyncratic, with rough edges. for every synth washed solid gold pop hit like 'slick' (imagine chrissie hynde whirling dervishly around a discoball), there's a startling leffield manoeuvre like 'gold key' which relocates them in a very modern mesh of seesawing keyboards & wailing guitars resulting in a gloriously off-kilter take on pop, with some wayward electronic elements. one for fans of metric, la roux or recent yeah yeah yeahs. *"stripped of all the superficial polish & glitzy sheen that so often equips haters with all the ammunition they need to call this genre throwaway, the band have crafted a truly unique, low-key & yet utterly captivating sound"* - *bbc*. [family](#)

the sunshine underground : nobody's coming to save you

it's been 4 years since the sunshine underground's debut release in 2006; time possibly spent nursing glow stick-inflicted hangovers after they first hit the radar supporting klaxons on nme's nu rave tour. but after a well-deserved rest, the leeds' lads return with armfuls of their signature funk-punk stylings. straying from their lcd soundsystem roots into the anthemic indie territory of the killers & kasabian, 'nobody's coming to save you' is an altogether bigger sound, with bass-heavy choruses & slick production that still keeps one eye fixed firmly on the dancefloor. [city rockers](#)

corinne bailey rae : the sea

written in the wake of the tragic death of her husband in 2008, corinne bailey rae's long awaited second album is a touching & extremely personal narrative of loss & strength. though her signature soulful tones & delicate melodies are still present, her songwriting reaches greater depths & utilises her full band, creating rich & textured compositions. despite its mournful subject matter, 'the sea' holds a warm & elegant presence. *"not just honest & cathartic, but jaw-dropping"* - *mojo* *"her quiet tribute to her late husband showcases a revelatory new sound: trippy 70s soul meets somersaulting jeff buckley-esque melody"* - *a*, [virgin](#)

race horses : goodbye falkenburg

with ideas, zig-zagging between musical reference points from the beatles to suicide, this is an ambitious debut from the welsh popsters. the place where barbershop meets post-rock via folk, oompah, psychedelia, glam & pop, they distil the energy of super furry animals, gorky's zygotic mynci & jarvis cocker into a wholly adventurous slice of whimsical, soul warming indie-pop. interspersing tracks are interludes taken from field recordings of nature or zoo animals or party guests, while string players from meilyr's course at the royal academy of music & a choir of trainee dentists cap off the madness. there's more than music influencing this melee – the band cite directors michel gondry & fim burton, children's classic 'where the wild things are' & cheeky wartime comic george formby as inspirations. "an off-kilter masterpiece, irreverent, unadulterated...deserves to be heard" 8/10 – [dis. fantastic plastic](#)

white hills : white hills

(cd / lp) 'white hills' finds the band at a breakthrough point musically. it is still heavy but finds the band employing a more open & free flowing style of playing. their debut 'heads on fire' was compared by some to hawkwind meets mudhoney & whilst the driving psychedelic fuzz that warranted this comparison is still present, gone is the rigid adherence to rehearsed versions & pre-conceived structures. 'white hills' was recorded at oneida's studio in brooklyn, with all drums on the album played by oneida drummer kid williams. their influence is evident, as the loose, almost freeform openness they demonstrated on 'rated o' can be seen here too. it makes for a thrilling listen. 'white hills' stands apart from their previous work in that there's a certain intimacy to it, an unpredictable toughness & brutality. in the mind of the band it's a birth, a new beginning & the eponymous title reflects this. [thrill jockey](#)

jason urick : husbands

jason urick's solo debut. those well-versed in the baltimore or experimental electronic music scenes might be familiar with jason urick's band wzt hearts (hoss records, car park) or his solo works as themoonstealingproject. there are similarities to his previous projects of course. those familiar with wzt hearts will feel that the tracks on 'husbands' are in-line with the more ambient pieces that the band produced: ghosted, fragmented melodies, distorted tones & so forth. compared to themoonstealingproject, 'husbands' has more depth sound-wise & the songs tend to take the longer route with tracks averaging around the 10 minute mark each. after spending 4 years in wzt hearts where all the music was improvised, it was a relaxing & refreshing change of pace to take an idea, let it unfurl & watch it burn slowly into extended soundscapes. the result is an album that is a complex study in subtlety & one that rewards patience. recommended. [thrill jockey](#)

james pants : seven seals

this record may well be released on stoned throw but it sure ain't hip hop! james pants is a one-man band/producer who hoovers up electro, soul, new wave, post-punk, techno & psychedelia & then vomits it back out in his own eccentric manner. his sophomore record is inspired by his fascination with cults & is far darker in spirit than his sunny 'odelay'-esque debut. 'seven seals' draws inspiration from some of the same sources as broadcast, namely the early electronic innovations of silver apples & united states of america & also shares genes with the burgeoning hypnagogic & minimal wave scenes. it is a ghostly record smeared with reverb & john carpenter synths riding skeletal bontempi beats with pants crooning alternately in falsetto & an ian curtis baritone. recommended. "sounds totally coherent, totally deliberate, & unlike so many records with aspirations to psychedelia it's entirely free of waffle" 4.5/5 – [fact. stoned throw](#)

postdata (paul murphy of wintersleep) : postdata

after an incredible 2009 for wintersleep, culminating in a 2 month tour with editors & a highly acclaimed album, paul murphy, lead singer of wintersleep, releases his debut solo album under the moniker postdata. recorded during christmas with his brother michael, this is a collection of songs which came to paul in a series of dreams shortly after the death of his grandparents. a christmas break, some scotch & a few vivid dreams appear to have combined perfectly & conspired to inspire murphy. the resulting record at times recalls low, nick drake, & smog amongst others but it's less sad sounding than these comparisons might suggest - a reflective, sometimes uplifting song cycle & a very lovely record. [one four seven](#)

xeno & oaklander : sentinelle

inspired by the likes of the largely unknown first wave of continental european minimal electronic bands of the early 80s, the seminal early industrial bands, as well as the ephemeral, psychedelic atmospheres of the british shoegaze bands of the 1990s, xeno & oaklander perform using entirely analogue synthesizers, sequencers & drum machines to produce a highly-crafted, complex form of moody, electronic pop music that is simultaneously romantically melancholic & affirmatively aggressive. 'sentinelle' functions like an icy porthole looking out onto the strange, paranoid worlds that xeno & oaklander have crafted. this minimal electronic masterpiece is a must for any fans of minimal wave & for those of modern bands such as cold cave or chromatics. [wierd records](#)

we are the ocean : cutting our teeth

the long awaited debut from the band who have managed to have 2 sold out tours without ever putting an album out. now harlow's post-hardcore 5-piece step up to claim their crown. 10 slices of driving, powerful & honest post rockin', all with a very british identity. definitely for those that appreciate their vocals both acerbic & soaring against a backdrop of well crafted songs. "good things really do come to those who wait. a melodic masterpiece, liam cromby's effortlessly soaring vocals pick you up off your feet, just long enough for the riff-heavy guitar / shouting vocals to grip you firmly by the ears & slam you face-first back down into the pit. we are the ocean have taken what alexisonfire started & made it their own. 'cutting our teeth' blows the doors to 2010 wide open" 9/10 - [rocksound. hassle records](#)

nadja & kodiak (split) : nadja & kodiak

(cd / lp) ambient/ downtempo/ experimental/ doom, much as you'd expect from these 2 outfits. the canadian shoegazers nadja & the still new & hot german band kodiak come up with 2 sidelong, complex tracks, complex in the sense of combining atmospheric instrumental fields with very dark symphonies. intense! nadja have the deep drones & all the darkness of doom but also have intricate melodies that permeate their long dirges resulting in a unique concoction of doom metal, drone, shoegazer layering & avant-rock explorations. kodiak require time & attention but when they lock you into their slowly developing, pachyderm-paced punishing groove, they have a lot to offer, proving that monotony & monolithic heaviness are enough to make great songs, if you know how. [denovali](#)

ocean colour scene : saturday

birmingham's emperors of rock'n'folk are back with their 9th studio album. in the 2 years since 'on the leyline' - described by uncut as their "career best" - they've played with thrash metal bands in korea & stole the show at 2090's 'v' (where they were named 'band of the festival' by radio 2). 'saturday' finds the band as vibrantly tuneful as they've ever been - it's a return to the barnstorming ocs of yore. from the opening bars of 'psych-folk opener '100 floors of perception' to the epic climax 'rockfield', it's a reminder that when it comes to delivering classic rock hooks, there aren't many who do it as well as this. you'll hear echoes of everyone from simon & garfunkel to mott the hoople & vivaldi in these loose-limbed grooves, not to mention trippy string sections, sky-scraping 'great gig in the sky' backing vocals, punk riffs & even the occasional burst of mandolin. [cooking vinyl](#)

everybody in the french resistance...now! (eddie argos of art brut & dyan valdés of the blood arm) : fixin the charts, volume one

the brainchild of eddie argos, eloquent & witty front man & lyricist of lo-fi heroes art brut gets together with girlfriend dyan valdes of l.a. rockers the blood arm to produce an album's worth of "answer songs": responses or rebukes to famous songs already made by other artists. their bizarrely titled side project sees them employing a simple approach of spoken boy vocals / harmonising girl vocals set against plinky-plonk keyboard / synth, occasionally interspersed with a brass flourish. a fun & inventive record full of lyrical bravado & catchy melodies. [cooking vinyl](#)

the hot rats (gaz & danny from supergrass) : turn ons

better known as half of much loved pop rock combo supergrass, gaz coombes & danny goffey's latest side project, the hot rats, was put together in some downtime from the 'grass – a little light relief from the day job. working with legendary producer nigel godrich, they have embarked on producing a 'pin-ups' style album covering favourite tracks from some of their musical heroes of the past 40 years. the doors, beastie boys, kinks, david bowie, the cure & more get a coombes/goffey dusting down & sprucing up & as you would imagine it's a not entirely serious romp through some of their inspirations & influences – all in all good clean fun! [g & d records](#)

ringo starr : y not

for the first time ever, starr produces himself on his most personal album yet. ringo is joined by old & new friends including paul mccartney, with whom starr sings on the stunning 'walk with you', a moving new song about the power of friendship. the album also features special guests like joss stone, ben harper & richard marx on vocals, ann marie calhoun on violin & fina sugandh (aka fina the tabla girl) on tabla & chanting. starr's songwriting collaborators here also include familiar & new names like joe walsh, dave stewart, joss stone, glen ballard, richard marx, van dyke parks, gary nicholson plus gary wright & his former roundhead band member, gary burr. "at 69, beatles drummer ringo starr is as doggedly good-natured as ever. his 16th studio album is full of straightforward, sweetly melodic tunes" – [rolling stone](#). [umc](#)

fauna : the hunt

originally self-released in an extremely limited run, this official release on aurora borealis has the addition of live drums & has been fully remastered by mell detmer (earth, sunn o)))). musically the album defines a progressive course for the band with increased use of synthesizers & extended atmospheric passages building the tension. the live drums & full remaster also greatly expand the sound, adding an urgency to the proceedings, especially in the more traditional black metal sections. 'the hunt' further solidifies fauna's mythic status as true pioneers on a musical trail that at once reaches out into our collective past & forward to what might be. for fans of wolves in the throne room, asunder, neurosis, leviathan. [aurora borealis](#)

the maccabees : war of arms – reissue with bonus tracks

the maccabees' critically acclaimed 2nd album is reissued with 5 new tracks, including new single 'empty vessels' featuring roots manuva. 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 have 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](#), "album of the year 2009" – [artrocker](#). [polydor](#)

vanessa paradis : best of

(2cd) this 2 cd collection from the french chanteuse brings together all her hits as well as featuring new tracks, hits & rarities. the collection starts with her late 80's hits 'joe le taxi' & 'marilyn & john' & ends with tracks from her 2007 'divinidylle' album plus new material only available on this double disc set which showcases all the characteristic innocence & provocative charm that have always been a trademark of vanessa's music. [wrasse](#)

v/a : the bert berns story - mr success: volume 2 ~ 1964-1967

bert berns is a songwriting legend. he may not be a household name but you will undoubtedly be familiar with many of his songs - 'twist & shout', 'here comes the night', 'under the boardwalk,' 'everybody needs somebody to love' & so many more - which is all the more impressive since his career was cut short with his untimely death, aged 38, in late 1967. this 2nd volume of his work, from 1964 up to his death, collects the familiar soul, rock & r&b classics by solomon burke, erma franklin, the drifters, van morrison & garnet mimms plus plenty of rare tracks by the likes of tammy montgomery (later terrell), the pussycats, barbara lewis. essential stuff. [ace](#)

loudon wainwright iii : essential recordings – one man guy

loudon wainwright iii has been making records for nearly 40 years & has earned himself a special place in the american songbook. honest, witty, brutal, humorous, wry, devastating – all are trademarks of his music. while he has run the gamut, often thematically & occasionally sonically, there is one ineffable quality that ties all his songs together : they're unmistakably "loudon". here are 10 selected from his rounder years - songs that cut to the core of what makes his music unique. many are at once vicious & sensitive, some both poignant & academic. [rounder](#)

georgie fame : mod classics - 1964-1966

georgie & his group, the blue flames, were the hippest outfit in mid-60s london. their residency at soho's flamingo club was a fixture for mods & american gis, who danced all night to the sounds of black america & georgie's interpretations of it. georgie covered the hippest jazz cuts, the most obscure soul from stax, motown & okeh & would also show his love of rhythm & blues with his take on numbers by ray charles & sam cooke. 'mod classics' collects those tunes that have their eyes fixed on the dancefloor & shows that there was more to georgie than the hits of 'yeh, yeh!' & 'getaway' – this is the georgie of the flamingo all-nighter, a man worshipped by the mods. [bgp](#)

dance/electonica

hot chip : one life stand

(cd / cd & dvd) hot chip return with what is undoubtedly their most up-front, coherent & melodically bold record to date; a warm & soulful, uplifting & heart-on-sleeve collection. this is a modern-day electronic ode to love in all its shapes & forms, from the anthemic 'hand me down your love' to the life-affirming absurdist black humour of 'i feel better' tempered with the contemplative, tender realism of 'slush' & the romantic melancholy of 'alley cats'. as with all hot chip records, this one sees a proliferation of influences as diverse as the burgeoning uk funky scene to soul music, golden age electronica, detroit house, southern soul & the sounds of arthur russell & prince all sitting effortlessly alongside the band's signature pop aesthetics, wild electronics & off kilter beats with joe goddard's deep-but-fragile everyman voice providing neat contrast to alexis taylor's plaintive croons. "an early marker for the best album of 2010" 4/5 – [q](#). [parlophone](#)

v/a : bob blank – the blank generation

(cd / lp - comes with an exclusive bonus disc) the 1st ever retrospective of one of new york's most revered of all producers, bob blank. this traces the history of his independent studio, blank tapes, one of the city's most important creative dens during the vibrant arts scene of the mid-'70s to mid-'80s. blank started producing with one of the first 12" disco records in '75 – jimmy sabater's 'to be with you'. he opened his own blank tape studios a year later, quickly becoming an essential port of call for new york's diverse artistic community, honing the freeform, anarchic visions of august darnell, cristina & lydia lunch for ze records & helping to shape the sound of many disco classics. includes tracks from charanga 76, sun ra, lydia lunch, james blood ulmer, gladys knight & more. [strut](#)

riva starr : if life gives you lemons, make lemonade

riva starr (aka stefano miele) has been the name on the lips of many house producers this past year or so & with good reason: his remix work & singles have been surefire dancefloor fillers. the italian dj/producer has a magpie's eye for samples & inspiration whether it is balkan folk, miami bass, acid squelch or percussion-heavy latin beats. thankfully, his tunes don't suffer from multiple-personality disorder. he's sure to put his own stamp on everything he does & knows when to approach a track with a serious dancefloor sound. more importantly, he doesn't shy away from including humour. "a clear statement that house music doesn't have to be a drab, paint-by-numbers affair" – *xlr8r*, "alive with the eclectic, playful pomp we'd expect from the made to play stable...an early benchmark for 2010" 8/10 – *clash*. [made to play](#)

v/a : mandarine traume - electronic escapes from the ddr 1981-1989

(cd & lp) 15 almost forgotten masterpieces of kraut-electronic music recorded in communist-ruled east germany between 1981 & 1989. the socialist state heavily regulated pop music - only a few state-sanctioned artists were authorized to put out albums on the one state owned label, amiga - but at some point in the early 1980s the communist party decided microcomputers were the future & gave the green light to the then futuristic sounding music made with them. after that, a few artists were allowed to create electronic music that let musician & listener flee from the everyday realities of eastern bloc life. this is a neat collection of rare-as-heck electronic pieces that owe much to the likes of tangerine dream, vangelis, genesis & pink floyd but are still great in their own right. [permanent vacation](#)

v/a : carl cox – black rock desert

(2cd) global underground continue their round-the-world trip, this time dropping carl cox in nevada's black rock desert to deliver a mighty sandstorming set of some of the most cutting edge & toughest techno around. as you'd expect from cox, the mixing is super-tight & seamless, keeping things banging nicely from start to end. both cds feature new tracks, remixes & exclusives from tiefschwartz, skylark, joey beltram, christian smith, guy j, bushwacka, onionz, robbie rivera, adam beyer, umek & politeca, to name just a few. one for lovers of proper hard techno! [global underground](#)

v/a : soma compilation 2010

another round-up of what's been a-happening at the mighty soma label over the past year. based in glasgow, soma have been delivering top quality underground house, techno & electronica for a long time now with established artists such as slam, silicone soul & the black dog all contributing to the label over the years & new contributors including joris voorn, samuel l. session & itamar sagi. this collection features tracks & remixes from all the aforementioned, making a great snapshot of a label still very much at the top of its game. [soma](#)

the herbaliser band : session 1

(reissue) whilst initially the herbaliser was very much a studio, sample-based project obsessed with all things hip hop, for their live shows the duo of jake wherry & dj ollie teebe were joined by a brass section, drummer & keys player to open the music out into something far funkier than on record. this was the 1st session recorded of the full live band & has become something of a fan favourite over the years. if proper, bad-ass vintage instrumental funk's your bag, then you need this quick smart! [!k7](#)

hip hop

rjd2 : the colossus

(cd / lp) since his all-conquering beat-heavy & simply awesome debut 'deadringer', it would be hard to argue that each new rj album hasn't seen diminishing returns, thankfully his 4th album seeks to address this situation. it storms out of the blocks with 'let there be horns', a slice of old school block-rocking hip-hop with his customarily heavy drums & horn stabs & from there tackles soul, pop, posse cuts & the occasional singer/songwriter track. where previously his song-based tracks fell flat, they now have the same zip & punch as his hip hop tunes & sharing the vocals with kenna (star trak), phonte coleman (little brother) & mcs catalyst, illogic & np ensures plenty of variety. what does this all add up to? simply his best record since his debut, an album that looks to the future while craftily taking a peek behind. "his finest album since 2002's *deadringer*" 4/5 – *spin*, "rjd2 excels at sonic collages" – *pitchfork*. [rj's electrical connection](#)

lil wayne : rebirth – explicit deluxe

he is without a doubt one of the biggest & most idiosyncratic rap stars to have graced the charts in a fair old while. so how does an eccentric & diminutive rapper follow up his biggest selling album? why, a rap-rock record of course! yes, lil wayne has taken to the idea of being a rockstar, going so far as to wield a guitar on stage & occasionally strum it. so yes, this is his 'rock' record & the riffs are certainly beefy & the beats hard & he as elected to sing instead of rap (with a helping hand from auto tune). the critics are undecided & a little dumbfounded by this record. it would seem lil wayne loves to work without a safety net! [island](#)

soul

v/a : the complete goldwax singles volume 3 1967-1970

(2cd) the final instalment in the 'complete goldwax singles' series collects tracks from the period after the height of the label's success & found the label attempting to broaden its appeal with forays into country & other musical avenues - & though not commercially successful, these releases were never less than superb. although goldwax found themselves out of fashion, the quality of their output didn't suffer & across this comp you will find incredible southern soul recorded in memphis & muscle shoals, not just by the headline acts such as james carr & spencer wiggins but by percy milem & willie walker, future stars such as timmy thomas & the terminally obscure willie morgan. these recordings represent the best work of such studios as american recordings, sounds of memphis & rick hall's fame studio. yet more essential southern soul from one its finest purveyors. [ace](#)

v/a : westbound detroit northern soul

westbound may have been more famous for its funkier acts like ohio players & funkadelic but that wasn't to say it didn't release its fair share of quality northern soul dance floor filling sides. unearthed here are 26 of their finest releases by the likes of denise lasalle, the detroit emeralds & jimmy scott, alongside the less familiar names of the houston outlaws & the magictones. of course, what westbound collection would be complete without a funkadelic tune?! this collection is the highest quality late 60s, early 70s crossover soul, the equal of anything released on that other detroit soul label – motown. excellent stuff indeed! [kent](#)

the whitefield brothers : earthology

it has been quite some time since the whitefield brothers (aka poets of rhythm) released a fresh album. in fact it has been 9 long years but it seems they haven't been idling away the hours & have corralled an impressive cast of collaborators including rappers edan, mr lif, percee p & med & the cream of the new soul outfits such as antiibalas, el michels affair to record an album that does it's best to synthesise ethiopian jazz, hip hop, funk & various afro poly-rhythms. in the past they have occasionally been guilty of dry, academic reproduction of sounds but here they have built something fresh & funky. "totally surprising, totally new, & yet completely cohesive" 4/5 – music ohm, "tremors of ancient tribal rituals re-awoken by men whose own gods are slabs of dusty black vinyl" – drowned in sound. [now again](#)

jose james : blackmagic

james has been described as a jazz singer for the hip hop generation & that is a most apt description. 'blackmagic' is the follow up to the critically acclaimed record 'the dreamer' & is further evidence that he is unafraid that his soul jazz should meet the new world. james has looked to some of today's most cutting edge beatmakers to produce tracks on this album including the mighty flying lotus, moodymann, taylor mc ferrin & dj mitsu. the result is a old & new worlds collide record that goes without a hitch. james' mellifluous vocals & the smooth jazz keys of sideman gideon van gelder make themselves at home among the thoroughly modern beats & the whole is a modern soul jazz record with few equals. [brownswood recordings](#)

angie stone : unexpected

r&b/soul luminary angie stone has never shied away from pushing her own limits & the limits of her music. she continues to delve further into funk & hip hop & has the uncanny ability to distill these influences & weave them together in a narrative that addresses life's ups & downs. during the midst of recording, stone's father passed away & rather than let it stop her in her tracks she was inspired by his spirit to keep stretching beyond her own limits & she certainly has. while embracing these other musical elements, stone holds tight to soul & anyway, she can sing whatever she wants with equal verve. from the sly & family stone sampling opener to the 90s girl-group inspired closer stone shows us how flexible she is. "unexpected simply feels like a leap more than a step" – amg, "stone has rarely sounded quite as beguiling or quite as open as she does here" 8/10 – popmatters. [stax](#)

aretha franklin : original album classics

(3 cd) this set contains 3 of the much overlooked albums the 'queen of soul' recorded for the columbia label back in the early 60s. 'the electrifying aretha franklin,' 'soul sister' & 'the tender, the moving, the swinging aretha franklin' aren't as rootsy as her later jerry wexler helmed work but her voice still soars & swoops gracefully over the jazzy arrangements & she displays plenty of the fiery passion that would be her trademark at atlantic. she may have just been a lady in waiting at this point but these albums leave in no doubt that she was in line to be one of the greatest soul stars of the 20th century. [sony](#)

marvin gaye : love marvin

(2cd) gaye is rightly considered one of the finest singers of all time & also one of the finest artists to boot. this 2cd set collects his greatest love songs & you might be tempted to say aren't all his songs love songs? well whether they are or aren't, this is still a stupendously great set. from his 60s work with the likes of kim weston & tammi terrell – which includes such wonderful songs as 'the onion song,' 'ain't no mountain high enough' & 'it takes two' – to his 70s work which found him on a far more personal trip that spawned such classics as 'let's get it on,' 'mercy mercy me (the ecology)' & 'i want you,' this man knew how to express his love. wonderful stuff! [motown](#)

solomon burke : essential recordings – it don't get no better than this

solomon burke is not only one of the greatest soul singers of all time but also an enduring interpretive artist whose career has seen a great resurgence in recent years. this album reissues his outstanding but little-known rounder studio sessions from 1986, along with a bonus track from his classic 'soul alive!' set. on this collection of mostly original r&b songs by dan penn, jimmy lewis & others, solomon is backed by one of new orleans' best rhythm sections. [rounder](#)

j a z z

stefano battaglia & michele rabbia : pastorale

on this beautiful duo album by 2 of italy's most creative musicians, roles are frequently overturned, as lyrical percussion shades into electronics & texture turns to melody. stefano battaglia reminds us that the piano is also a percussion instrument & michele rabbia is sensitive to all the tonal implications of drums & cymbals. the musicians play with & without scores in material that is variously open-form, tightly-controlled, inspired by folk idioms, by classical music & by art installations. battaglia allows beautiful themes to ripple through the work & sounds are given room to blossom. [ecm](#)

françois coutureier : un jour si blanc

the french pianist françois coutureier's solo excursion 'un jour si blanc' was conceived by its maker as the 2nd volume in a planned trilogy & an extension of the earlier quartet disc 'nostalgia', dedicated to filmmaker andrei tarkovsky. the album's starting point is a poem by tarkovsky. "i wanted to pay tribute to some great artists i particularly like", says coutureier. these include johann sebastian bach, arthur rimbaut, claude debussy, franz schubert, toru takemitsu, joan miro & more. if standard jazz is a component of this disc it is filtered through the focus of a player steeped in the european classical & experimental traditions. this 1st solo disc from the insightful & poetic french pianist is undoubtedly a richly creative contribution to the unaccompanied piano genre established at ecm. [ecm](#)

b l u e s

johnny adams : essential recordings – the great johnny adams jazz album

johnny adams was one of the greatest singers to emerge from the classic rhythm & blues era, with a honeyed voice that could deliver a tender ballad as convincingly as a soul-testifying shout. this collection explores johnny's jazz side, in the company of such jazz greats as dr. lonnie smith, harry connick, jr., houston person, david torcanowsky, alvin "red" tyler & many of new orleans' leading musicians, along with several arrangements by wardell quezergue. [rounder](#)

clarence gatemouth brown : essential recordings – flippin' out

clarence gatemouth brown was an american music original, bringing together blues, r&b, cajun fiddling & big band jazz to create his unique "texas swing". these recordings were made during a high point in his career, when his first rounder album, 'alright again!', won his first grammy award. here are wonderful, swinging arrangements that frame gate's fiery guitar & fiddle playing. [rounder](#)

mississippi john hurt : essential recordings – candy man blues

mississippi john hurt, who first recorded in 1928, was "rediscovered" in the 1960s, when he became a folk festival favourite. he was a bluesman but his gentle singing & intricate finger-picked guitar made him wholly different from other mississippi players from his era. the 1963 recordings on this disc are culled from his first late-career sessions & include many of his best-loved songs. [rounder](#)

ted hawkins : essential recordings – cold & bitter tears

before the release of his 1982 debut album on rounder records, ted hawkins earned his living by busking on the boardwalk at venice beach, california, a venue that he never completely abandoned. yet, ted was a world-class singer with one of the most powerful & moving voices in american music, as well as a deeply personal songwriting style that drew equally on soul & country roots. he went on to record for other labels but these tracks represent the true & unmitigated soul of ted hawkins. [rounder](#)

johnny copeland : essential recordings – down on bended knee

johnny copeland was one of the last of the great texas bluesmen, a pure blues artist whose incisive lead guitar, gritty vocals & masterful songwriting made him an american music treasure. these recordings were made in the 80s, after johnny had relocated from texas to new york city, where he began working with the team of producer dan doyle & arranger ken vangel. here are the very best of these classic recordings. [rounder](#)

tracy nelson : essential recordings – soul sessions

coming of musical age in the late 60s with the band mother earth, tracy nelson revealed herself to be a singer of immense depth & soul. in the late 70s, she released these recordings of classic & soon-to-be classic songs, with backing by her longtime band & added players. her interpretations have stood the test of time & constitute a substantial part of the legacy of this great american singer. [rounder](#)

ruth brown : essential recordings – ms. b's blues

ruth brown was an american entertainment icon, the first bona fide star of the nascent rhythm & blues era in the early 1950s, an actress in john waters' original 'hairspray', a tony-winning broadway star & a grammy-winning recording artist. these recordings are taken from her final 2 grammy-nominated albums. they're a musical highpoint of her long career - witty, sophisticated & swinging - with an all-star new orleans-centred band in support. [rounder](#)

duke robillard : essential recordings – rockin' guitar blues

duke robillard is one of the great guitar masters of our time, adept at styles that range from rock to swing but always with the blues at the heart of his music. after founding the band roomful of blues, duke struck out on his own & these are among the first recordings he made with his stripped-down trio that put the focus clearly on his guitar & songwriting. included are 3 songs previously unavailable on cd. [rounder](#)

f o l k

ian king : panic grass & fever few

a beautiful & remarkably assured debut album by a dry stone waller from yorkshire. this compelling album mixes english traditional song with a very contemporary sound palate in a way that on paper sounds ridiculous but with beautifully mellow dub touches, echoing brass flourishes, some compelling a capella & even a track backed by ghetto priest, this is a daring but remarkably successful record. this kind of fusion music can often feel forced & dishonest but working with the acclaimed on-u sound crew (adrian sherwood & skip 'little axe' mcdonald), has enabled king to bring a new & exciting perspective to the songs of old england. for fans of progressive folk from the likes of beirut, imagined village or bellowhead. "king is an impressive guitarist & banjo player with a sturdy, no-nonsense voice & the often subtle dub effects are used carefully to enhance the songs" 4/5 – guardian, "elegant, witty, daring & powerful"- shirley collins. [fledgling](#)

jason steel : baby, wolves abound

jason steel is guitarist in the owl service & he also performs as a duo with nancy wallace. this is his 3rd solo ep release & the 1st offering from new label rif mountain which has been formed by the founder members of midwich records. the 8 songs on offer here are stark, stripped down affairs recorded live with one microphone. they highlight jason's skilful way with guitar, banjo & ukulele & include inspired covers of cat power's 'baby doll' & bob dylan's 'boots of spanish leather'. "with the cautious, unhurried pace of a fahey disciple, on a brace of rags...his picking trickles easily like an appalachian mountain stream....his soft voice lulls seductively. a gracious, stately debut" 5/5 – r2 mag. for fans of the owl service, nancy wallace, bert jansch & nick drake. [rif mountain](#)

buffy sainte-marie : soldier blue - the best of the vanguard years

buffy sainte-marie was first noticed on the folk circuit in the mid 60s. since then she has been involved in country, rock & soundtracks but for most music fans she is remembered for the albums she recorded for vanguard in the 1960s, which spotlighted the plight of her fellow native americans. although she was pretty much the only voice of the native american population that had a substantial platform, her songs addressed more universal themes as well & in fact, a number of her songs were popularised by other artists in the 60s & 70s including donovan, elvis presley & quicksilver messenger service. this collection compiles her folk years on vanguard, including her hit single 'soldier blue'. a unique & powerful voice in popular music. [vanguard](#)

v/a : bbc folk awards 2010

(2cd) the 6th annual compilation collects tracks by the nominees at this year's bbc folk awards including show of hands, cara dillon, mawkin:causley, the unthanks, bellowhead & many more & represents the very best of the vibrant uk folk music scene. the awards have become something of an institution & chance to celebrate the continuing vitality of british folk. the 2nd disc collects tracks by upcoming artists recorded at the bbc young folk awards including future stars of the scene such as jackie oates, jon boden, lau & more. [pmd](#)

w o r l d

v/a : far out jazz & afro funk

following guides to bossa nova & samba, far out's 3rd instalment delivers a genre-spanning slice of the finest funky, afro jazz. far out have long been digging up tunes that meld the sounds of the african diaspora with dancefloor filling tunes. this 3rd instalment collects classic tracks by azymuth & grupo batuque, alongside more modern fair by troubleman (aka harmonic 313 aka global communication) & the modern samba & bossa of marcos valle & sabrina malheiros & provides a connoisseur's choice of hard, grooving & classy, essential, contemporary brazilian jazz & afro funk. [far out recordings](#)

r e g g a e

v/a : soul jazz records presents dancehall - the rise of jamaican dancehall culture vol. 2

(2cd / 2 part lp) 100% essential 2nd volume of jam packed monster dancehall cuts on this soul jazz comp, featuring the a-z of dancehall's finest moments. this mammoth double album features killer tracks back-to-back from the finest dancehall artists ever: yellowman, shabba ranks, lone ranger, buju banton, trinity, johnny osbourne, half pint & many more. featuring classic tracks & super rare cuts, all-important in the world of dancehall, this collection has been lovingly compiled by steve barrow (co-founder of the blood & fire label), the album also comes with extensive sleeve notes, alongside all this are more of the amazing photographs of beth lesser, first featured in soul jazz's recently published book 'dancehall!'. the bible (part 2) of dancehall history & the artists that make the music. [soul jazz](#)

soundtracks

dr feelgood : oil city confidential (ost)

julien temple ('the filth & the fury,' 'joe strummer : the future is unwritten') has filmed a loving documentary about canvey island's finest, dr feelgood, that includes home videos, archive footage of the band & contemporary interviews with all the band members still standing, including quixotic guitarist wilko johnson. the band haven't perhaps had the props they deserve down the years but this film seeks to redress that situation & is a fitting tribute to the pub rock band that inspired many of punk's 1st wave, including joe strummer, the ramones & latterly, the likes of primal scream & british sea power. "that doyen of music docs julien temple pumps all sorts of tactile detail into the story of dr feelgood" – bbc, "engaging, sympathetic & darkly humorous" 4/5 – uncut. [emi](#)

vinyl

thee silver mt. zion orchestra : kollaps tradixionales

(double heavy-weight 10" vinyl in a deluxe package that includes a cd of the album, a special 16-page 7"x9" art book of found image collages by efrim menuck & filmmaker jem cohen & a limited edition silkscreen poster) thee silver mt. zion's (the group have officially dropped the "tra-la-la band" from its name) 6th full-length recording & 1st since shedding 3 members & recruiting one (drummer david payant). as 'kollaps tradixionales' ably demonstrates, they have lost none of their raw & frazzled anthemic power & continue to forge bold new ground in the search for a unique hybrid of punk, blues, psych, folk & modern orchestral idioms. anchored by the fried electric guitar & voice of band leader efrim menuck (whose delivery is often reminiscent of p.i.l.'s john lydon circa 'metal box'), smz continue to slide comfortably towards an expansive, loose & blues-inflected balladry. visceral, smouldering & driven by some of this decade's more devastating lyrical conjurings, these are songs of complex, desperate & thorny hope. a swelling, slow, rich & dramatic record. [constellation](#)

v/a : next stop...soweto – township sounds of the golden age of mbaqanga

(2lp) strut have released their fare share of excellent comps of african music. up til now they have largely concentrated on west africa but 'next stop...' seeks to unearth various musical styles from the south africa of the 60s & 70s. this 1st volume concentrates on music from the township. many of the tracks collected here were only available in small pressings made locally & it has taken significant vinyl archaeology to unearth these gems. the music of the township takes in soul, jazz, rumba, rural zulu music but has a personality & edge that is unmistakably distinct. 'next stop...' has been painstakingly researched & the results are quite wonderful. highly recommended. [strut](#)

pontiak : sea voids

(ltd. lp + download code) pontiak wrote, recorded & mixed 'sea voids' in 8 evening sessions over the course of 3 weeks. the brothers sketched out what kind of album they wanted to make, visual, expressive, & inspired by what the brothers had seen on tour. they could have set themselves on the same trajectory as their previous records, one that compared them with kyuss's bludgeoning hallucinatory appeal but instead sort to spread their sound in several directions at once. from the iommi inspired slow riffing to the baked folky whispers of 'life & coral', pontiak seem fearless of boundaries. "a grab-bag of styles: sabbathy-sludge, amp torturing experimentation, cream-like alchemies of whispery verse & electric blues. sea voids opens up a jigsaw puzzle box worth of possibilities" – dusted. [thrill jockey](#)

spoon : transference [anti](#)

scout niblett : the calcination of scout niblett [drag city](#)

v/a : pop ambient 2010 [kompakt](#)

v/a : we are only riders - the jeffrey lee pierce sessions project [glitterhouse](#)

m a g s

mojo : march 2010 syd barrett, charlotte gainsbourg, wild beasts, captain beefheart, sly stone & cover mount cd of exclusive syd barrett covers from the likes of hope sandoval, field music, j mascis & many more.

uncut : march 2010 joy division, jeff beck, the strokes, low anthem, serge gainsbourg & jagjaguwar covermount cd including bon iver, black mountain, oneida, sunset rubdown & many more.

singles

single of the week

small black / washed out : despicable dogs (washed out remix) / you'll see it (small black

remix) (v.limited 7") washed out, aka new wave auteur ernest greene, has reworked the gorgeous new single from long island duo small black, turning the original slower & woozier with an extra layer of wistfulness to the vocals. in return, they have brilliantly reworked a track from his 'life of leisure ep'. all very hazy, woozy & muffled – just how we like it! [lovepump](#)

marina & the diamonds : hollywood (cd / 7") the greek/welsh singer is one of this year's most hotly tipped acts. on this refreshingly alive, spiky record, she affirms her engaging & provocative presence. hear the full album in the shop on tue 16th feb, 6pm. [679](#)

strange boys : be brave / keys to the kingdom (v.limited 7") the new alt-sax roadhouse anthem from the texan ruffians, taken from their forthcoming album of the same name. has a different b-side to the in the red release in the states. [rough trade](#)

doom : gazillion ear (12") one of the best tracks from doom's ace 'born into this' record gets some serious reworkings. featuring a rather splendid & very thom yorke-y thom yorke remix & other remixes from dr who dat & tv on the radio's dave sitek, this is ace! [lex](#)

quail lungs : dumb dadadum (v.limited 7") channelling randy newman's nasal idiosyncrasies, this is belted out in a raw & rather beautiful way that sounds like he only had a couple minutes to get it out before he broke down completely. two gallants meets phosphorescent in a cupboard. very of the moment but loving this moment! [ppm](#)

phoenix : 1901 (7") memory tapes reworks one of the best / most ubiquitous songs of last year & the results are predictably great. [v2](#)

phoenix : 1901 / love like a sunset (animal collective remix – deakin's jam) (12") ac's remix transports the original to more psychedelic climes with voice-looping electronics, processed spiritualized-esque guitars & programmed beats. [v2](#)