

o u t t h i s w e e k

album of the week

here we go magic : here we go magic developed over a two-month period of stream-of-consciousness recording, brooklyn's luke temple releases his self-titled debut under his new moniker. it's a remarkable departure from his signature singer-songwriter material, recorded at home using analog synths, a cassette 4-track & his trusty sm-57 mic, colouring the sound with warmth & creating textures you want to wrap yourself in. the album opens with the trance-inducing polyrhythms & gorgeous multi-layered vocals of the astonishing 'only pieces' & what follows is an album oozing with magical, deceptively simple & unshakeably memorable sounds. many of the songs pulse with infectious afro-beat & kraut-rock influenced grooves, calling to mind classic albums like talking heads' 'remain in the light' & paul simon's 'graceland' whilst in contrast, the instrumental tracks conjure mystical introspective landscapes reminiscent of popol vuh's unforgettable ambience. despite the album's murky aquatic underpinnings, it'll have you singing along & shakin' what you got, especially to the ebullient blissed-out tracks like 'fangala' & 'tunnelvision'. very highly recommended! "temple happens to know exactly what to add to a song to allow it to pass the threshold from "nice" into "wonderful" - pop matters. [western vinyl](#)

rock / indie / contemporary

emmy the great : first love finally! the highly anticipated debut from the charming emma-lee moss & co. it's a self funded, produced record made in collaboration with guitarist euan hinshelwood & pianist tom rogeron, recorded at the earlies' studios & it draws from a wealth of influences including leonard cohen, patti smith, the go-betweens, belle & sebastian & will oldham. this little gem of a debut glistens with her humorous lyrics (which are sometimes touching & sentimental & at other times are scathing & sarcastic) & beautiful, sparse (but not lightweight) arrangements. at first it all sounds too simple to be anything truly special but after a few listens, her songs start to work their magic & then their warmth envelops you & you won't want them to end - much in the same way that laura marling's wonderful 'alas i cannot swim' sucks you in & won't let go. if patrick wolf's 'lycanthropy', belle & sebastian's 'tigermilk' or fionn regan's 'the end of history' cast their spell on you, then make space in your heart for emma-lee's enchanting debut. "a triumph, with a maturity beyond her years, & with a humour no less enjoyable for being subtler...it's amazing" 9/10 - [dis. close harbour](#)

phosphorescent : to willie (cd & lp) bridging the gap between original albums, matthew houck releases this unique & truly beautiful love letter to willie nelson. these 11 willie nelson covers have had a very personal touch added to each one & matthew houck's voice & style finds an inspiring home in these country outsider classics. phosphorescent's previous album 'pride' has been one of the true slow burners over the last couple of years & gradually every single one of us residents has come to fall in love with it. 2 years of solid touring with a full band shines through on this release & the resulting album is so much more than a collection of covers - it's a full blown classic in its own right. a response to willie nelson's album of lefty frizzell covers, 'to lefty from willie', this latest album by houck in turn pays tribute to the red headed stranger's own songbook, taking on bonafide country classics like 'can i sleep in your arms', 'heartaches of a fool' & 'reasons to quit'. this will delight existing fans. if you haven't yet discovered the currently much overlooked work of matthew houck & like bon iver, will oldham, castanets or smog, then you definitely need to check this guy out. [dead oceans](#)

the pains of being pure at heart : the pains of being pure at heart (cd & lp) this 4-piece hail from the same new york scene as the vivian girls & crystal stiltz but they play dreamy, noisy pop with blissful melodies & blistering drums, drawing from their shared love of the pastels, the ramones, american indie noise-pop legends black tambourine & 'sunny sundae smile'-era my bloody valentine. the brooklyn trio of vocalist/guitarist kip berman, bassist alex naidus & vocalist/keyboardist peggy wang-east mix sugary boy/girl vocals with jesus & mary chain's rain clouds & the resulting sound sits somewhere between belle & sebastian & the smiths. over 10 tracks, they demonstrate an absolute mastery of noise/jangle pop, their songs being a perfect distillation of classic pop melody & thrilling, rushing guitar noise that have had the taste-making blogs across the planet tripping over themselves in search of superlatives. [fortuna pop](#)

woodpigeon : treasury library canada (limited edition with bonus 10 track cd of home demos & remixes) this is the 2nd album (of sorts) from the prolific canadian outfit, headed by creative provocateur mark hamilton. the prairie collective's new release is a 14-song collection of bits & bobs that will tide fans over in anticipation of the band's next studio record (due late in 2009), but 'treasury library canada' could certainly pass itself off as the proper follow-up to 2006's 'songbook' (released in the uk in 2008). band leader mark hamilton's ability to write consistently strong songs is impressive - all of the tracks on this disc fall into woodpigeon's delicate indie pop & orchestral folk style, but hamilton varies his mood enough to keep the songs from blurring into each other. the band clearly have a penchant for jingly, ramshackle chamber-folk concoctions driven by banjo, glockenspiel, a sprawling choir & quivering male vocals & as such, should appeal to fans of sufjan stevens, reindeer section, iron & wine & andrew bird or broken social scene. "the most unjustly overlooked band in canada" - [guardian](#), "it's stirring sufjan-esque stuff..." - [nme](#). [end of the road records](#)

psychic ills : mirror eye (cd & lp) sprawling opener 'mantis' sets the tone here, with modulating synths & hand drums giving way to a loose groove, terrestrial guitar patterns & shamanic vocals. if you're still around when it rolls into its ending 11 minutes later, it's safe to say you're on board! next, the open-ended trance rock of 'meta' fades up as if the band has already been jamming on it long before we were let in. 'sub synth' is an off-the-cuff synthesizer splice that descends into the improvised space raga of 'eyes closed'. 'i take you as my wife again' continues deeper into the abstract with metallic synths & improvised electronics transitioning into organic percussion & whistles before arriving at its minimal techno inspired ending. 'fingernail tea' is the most straight forward song & vaguely harkens back to elements of their previous full-length, 'dins'. the hallucinatory 'the way of' is the album's last burst of energy & the final track 'go to the radio' brings us nicely back down to earth. a deeply satisfying listen & one that rewards repeated listens. *"everything about them is bewitching" - village voice, "somewhere between oceanic guitar abstraction & the brittle crunch of psychedelic guitar rock, feeding their extended chugging jams through a thick fog of fuzz" - wire.* [the social registry](#)

the airborne toxic event : s/t psychamerica with a punk punch from the californian 5-piece. garnering comparisons to everyone from modest mouse & the arcade fire to the clash & u2, the band's debut is one of the most anticipated releases of the 2009. with songs that feature unforgettable hooks, to our ears they call to mind the anthemic offerings of glasvegas, the twilight sad or the killers & as such, they sound like they're set for indie-rock domination. the ambitious outfit have made one hell of a statement with their debut, matching sprightly guitar-pop, gloomy beat-poetry & heart-tugging violin in a way that sounds seriously impressive. *"across its 10 tracks, 'the airborne toxic event' possesses a raw intensity that defines the band's sound... this is a fine, upstanding introduction to the tormented world of the airborne toxic event & one that vivaciously whets the appetite in anticipation of what might come next"* 7/10 – *dis.* [major domo](#)

moriarty : gee whizz but this is a lonesome town (limited edition 40 page book package with a bonus cd which includes a cover of depeche mode's 'enjoy the silence' along with 7 live & alternative versions & 2 videos) the gold-selling franco-american band's music is a sweet anachronism, inspired by american & irish folk, country music & southern us blues. shunning glossy production for something suitably earthier & heartier, this album is consistently lo-fi in its approach & all the more charismatic for it. rosemary stanley has one of those truly 'love it or hate it' voices which puts her in the same category as joanna newsom & rachel unthank (& musically we're not far off here either) but this country inspired weirdy-folk could well appeal to fans of larkin grimm or alela diane & diane cluck (it's like a jollier, beefed up version of their work). you've gotta give this a listen just to hear for your self how they manage to lyrically link tom waits, a vicar & a pizza! superbly bonkers, squiffy country-cana! *"intriguingly ramshackle, acoustic-folk-blues cum boho-cabaret-jazz quintet, touting a shed load of esoteric instruments & songs about roaming buffalo" - time out.* [naïve](#)

robyn hitchcock & the venus 3 : goodnight oslo hitchcock's latest incarnation with the venus 3 (peter buck, scott mccaughey & bill rieflin) spawned the critically acclaimed 'ole tarantula' in 2006. 3 years later, this confection of rock stars & underground legends is back with another helping of post-modern pop. stabbing horns from compatriot terry edwards swim alongside gorgeous harmonies throughout this snapshot of hitchcock's version of pop music in a perfect world. the album also features guest vocalists colin melody, sean nelson & morris windsor who help robyn sing his way through a dreamy remembrance of 16 years of intoxication. a new era in an already fabled career, robyn's latest work strengthens the pull of his lunar-like gravity & adds yet another chapter to the myth of one of rock music's most influential undercurrents. *"hitchcock's reputation as a floyd-obsessed psych-pop walter de la mare is deserved, but his facility for over-elaboration sometimes has a tendency to crowd out his music. not here though. there's a demo-fresh zip to these surreal sketches....an album for all weathers"* 4/5 – *the times.* [proper records](#)

lily allen : it's not me, it's you the lovely lily's 2nd album features 12 brand new tracks & is the follow up to her massive selling debut, 'alright', which established the outspoken mockney popstress as the voice of a generation. the long-awaited follow-up is full of similarly zeitgeist-inflected tunes which have been produced & recorded by the bird & the bee's greg kurstin. the first single, 'the fear', is somewhat heavier in tone than previous singles & sees allen dealing with notions of modern celebrity, a theme that continually crops up on the album. allen also confronts political issues on this markedly more adult album than its predecessor. *"a piece of exquisitely produced, loveable pop" – bbc, "dismissing this album out of hand would be a grave error of judgement. there's nothing as straight-up enjoyable as 'ldn' or quite as remarkably scathing as 'smile', but sticking with 'it's not me, it's you' & penetrating its jarringly slick-meets-garageband-amateur exterior is wholly advisable" – dis.* [regal](#)

æthenor : faking gold & murder the 3rd earth-shattering album by vincent de roguin (shora), stephen o'malley (sunn0))) / ktll & daniel o'sullivan (guapo). this time, the core trio is joined by percussionists nicolas field & alex babel, as well as renowned guitarist alexander tucker & the inimitable david tibet. æthenor's heaviest outing yet is driven by a weighty low-end & the full fury of babel & field's free-wheeling drums. the band's electronics, guitar, rhodes & organ ride waves of sound in a tightly-controlled blare, leaving plenty of space for tibet's declarations of the mystical & supernatural. tibet is in top form, rising out of the tempest at just the right moment - grounding the squall at times, voicing the apocalypse at others. *"brooding, primeval, dark, alchemical epics are full of a ferocious intensity, sounding more like a starlit night being ripped open by lightning than a musical group. intelligent & primal, like a demonic workshop, battering up pandemoniums & dreaming of gold & murder, æthenor are spectacular" - david tibet.* [vhf](#)

zu : carboniferous wow! what a treat! a set of seriously awe-inspiring avant-noise/free jazz. this is undoubtedly one of the strongest releases on mike patton's ipecac label for some time - zu's debut album for the label, has been eagerly awaited by devotees of heavy skronk & genre-defying aggression. this powerful & intense record will completely blow you away - it's noisy, heavy, unruly & abrasive but by god, it's an almighty achievement. since 1997, this metal/noise/free/punk/jazz-inspired 3-piece have built an enviable reputation for sonic ferocity, hypnotic complexity & visceral attack. featuring material honed over a year of touring as a quartet with mike patton, 'carboniferous' takes their sound further into a world in which rock, jazz & noise co-exist without compromise. features guest appearances from king buzzo (melvins) & mike patton (of course!). fans of don caballero, battles, acoustic ladyland or hella, take note! *"short & sharp & ultra precise, like naked city playing the ruins but the feeling here is free & wild. fucking great!"* - aquarius records, *"combining the abstractions of sonic youth with the out-there explorations of the best free jazz"* - the times. [ipecac](#)

zombi : spirit animal ok - so in theory, you should never judge a book (or record) by its cover, but i think in this case it would be fair to do exactly that. with an enormously, heavy creature (namely an elephant) bounding through the pink & blue tinged cosmos with lightning striking in the background, the sleeve pretty much sums up the proggy nuttiness of this bass/guitar/synths & drums instrumental duo. they are obviously originally inspired from the punk genre, but like many others (upsilon acruX, guapo, cheer-accident etc.), they use elements of old art rock & progressive rock as well (maybe a little more than an element of progressive rock in this case in fact!). having previously taken cinematic synth-based rock as far as it could go, the duo have added not only guitars, but a whole new attitude as well. this record is a tour de force whose up-tempo moods, patented psychedelic poly-rhythms & bouncing, lush interplay between men & machines, ushers in a scintillating new era for the band. with their tongue firmly in their cheek we suspect, zombi give instrumental music the punch in the gut it needs by blending a genuine sense of warmth & emotion with the darkness they are heralded for. for fans of tangerine dream, goblin, early genesis, jesu or acid mothers temple. [relapse](#)

astral social club : octuplex after a couple of years in the underground wilderness, neil campbell's unique astral social club returns to vhf with the squelching, restless ambience of 'octuplex'. the cd is split roughly in half between harmonia / voigt-style chuggers & sweeping swirls of instantly recognizable drone, familiar to fans of campbell's extensive contributions to vibracathedral orchestra, sunroof! & others. his interest in techno comes out on 'caustic roe' & 'muscle adductor', which neatly compile the influence of recent minimal jam innovations with piles of synth & effects noise, lending the beat-driven tracks a rough, unfussy style. other cuts like 'müggik churn' & 'pilgrim sunburst' swell with twittering electric birdsong & synthetic rain, the trademark sound of many astral titles. 'octuplex' packed full with collaborator cameos, including the familiar (richard youngs, john clyde-evans) & the novel (spider stacy from the pogues!). [vhf](#)

fake male voice (tunde from tv on the radio) : cou cou sous les nuages /

omg!!!fmv!!! (ultra limited, import picture disc 7" with dvd) fake male voice (fmv) is tunde adebimpe from tv on the radio's new project (coz he doesn't have enough to do already with all his other side-projects) & this release features 2 brand new songs, with 1 bonus track on the dvd. the 7" features 'cou cou sous les nuages' on the a-side & 'omg!!!fmv!!!' on the b. in addition, the set comes with a dvd that includes music videos tunde made for both songs, plus one for a 3rd song, 'lone sum humm'. 'a.cou cou sous les nuages' is an instrumental piece comprised of a simple drum beat, eerie synth & casio crunches that build into a dense & textured offering. 'omg!!!fmv!!!' is a prince-like thrilling track which layers adebimpe's falsetto come-ons over cymbal-heavy drum loops, gothic organs & a gradual accumulation of buzzing retro-futuristic electronics. a hot addition to your collection. [heartfast](#)

sibrydion : campfire classics having spent the last couple of years building up a loyal following in wales with their welsh language albums, sibrydion release their debut english language long player. though not fundamentally a concept lp, brothers meilir & osian gwynedd have laced 'campfire classics' with their "django folklore" that betrays their healthy love for the wild, wild west. the album has been produced by their friend cian ciaran from super furry animals as both brothers have contributed to super furry animals albums in the past & osian most recently played drums on tour with gruff rhys' 'candylon project'. sibrydion have lassoed stories of leone-inspired tales of betrayal & redemption whilst skimming a coin into burt bacharach's pool of bittersweet songwriting. essentially, this is a warped pop album. opening with the cinecitta inspired 'god forgives, i don't' (the title of a '67 spaghetti western), the band gallop into 'coupe de grace', a story of how love & betrayal can change a man's heart, that bolts out of its swing doors faster than klaus kinski steaming to the bar after 17 years in his grave. bright, dynamic & eccentric pop music that'll appeal to sfa/gruff rhys fans. [dell'orso records](#)

the visitations : the conundrum tree 'the conundrum tree' serves at once as a reassurance that the diy freak folk scene is alive & kicking & as a testament to the idea that albums can be weird, or even disturbing at times, without sacrificing the musicality & substance. davey wrathgaber, the off-kilter poet, songwriter & humorist who calls himself the visitations, approaches each new album with a theme in mind. wrathgaber (who formerly performed in fablefactory, elf power) contributes thoughtful passages to the black comedy that is love, hate & the nothing between. the album, which features athens notables derek alinstead, jason nesmith & matt hudsons, seamlessly combines literate, often farcical, always clever lyrics a la smog, magnetic fields & will oldham with the tasty, psychedelic hooks that helped cement the visitations' home town of athens, ga. as the 'pop metropolis of the south.' some of the vocal melodies are pushed forth with a desperate sense of urgency not unlike those of the mountain goats. [orange twin](#)

astra : where you rest (limited) written when she was just 19 & recorded live over 2 days, this is the debut album from the brighton singer-songwriter. astra has a mesmeric voice, by turns vulnerable & dreamy, powerful & direct & with an acoustic sound that has been compared to joni mitchell, beth gibbons & the autumnal englishness of nick drake, she brings unflinching honesty to her songs. she catalogues stories of everyday hopes & disappointments & these poignant portraits are complemented beautifully by spare, precise arrangements. abi fry (british sea power, bat for lashes) plays viola on all but one of the 8 tracks, sometimes playfully underscoring the vocals, sometimes soaring, sometimes brooding, occasionally breaking down into dissonance. dave hickson on piano adds delicate sketchy motifs & hammered tattoos, perfectly fitting the mood of these beautiful songs, while astra's acoustic guitar underpins the overall sound. [isolation recordings](#)

shrag : shrag these 5 brighton belles & boys are the new darlings of the art-rock scene. loved by the cribs (ryan chose them for tour support), they're known for their high-energy show with the occasional dirty lyric. the 3 girl / 2 boy riot popsters' sound is an angular b-52's / fall / go go's/ huggy bear affair. with admirable economy of purpose, shrag have released 10 songs of precise pop over 5 7" singles released by 'where it's at is where you are'. these songs signalled their intention to shimmy, stagger & storm balconies everywhere. 'shrag' by shrag is a collection of those 7" singles plus some extras. 12 everyday stories collated from the scribbles of a diary : tales of school bullies, 90s crushes, creepy scenesters, diatribes against obsessive friendships, people who talk too much during sex & pop songs ruined by wrecked relationships. it's all gleefully kicked off by an anthem against pregnancy. [where its at is where you are](#)

the silt : cat's peak this is the debut 'proper' release from toronto-based experimental folk trio the silt & their first for fire records after 2 lo-fi outings on their own label. skilled at their craft, the silt are able to both astound with their talent (their drummer plays bass & drums at the same time!) & use it for more improvised forays. they are the true meeting of pop & experimentalism, most notably on soulful album opener 'come back to the willow'. their alternative rock / psychedelic folk features sublime harmonies delivered with a fine avant-folk country sensibility. *"imagine, the kind of low-fidelity, ramshackle blue-eyed soul last heard pimped by beastie boys' fender rhodes tickler, money mark, on his keyboard repair album & you're nearly there. loungey albeit longing, this is down-tempo shorn of coffee table schtick & stuffed with soul"* - the times. [fire records](#)

st deluxe : st deluxe glasgow's pure pop noisesters release their debut album. centered on the singer/songwriter talents of guitarists jamie cameron & martin kirwan, st deluxe also feature drummer stuart kidd & bassist brian mcewan & all the bandmembers have also performed with legendary glasgow indie pop band the bmx bandits. the scottish 4-piece channel the fuzzed-up ghosts of sebadoh, my bloody valentine & early teenage fanclub, with a sweet blend of plaintive melodies & old-school overdriven antics. alan mcgee has referred to the band as "a scottish nirvana for the twenty-first century". *"their sound is reminiscent of dinosaur jr, sonic youth, my bloody valentine...with near-whispered vocals, fuzzed-out guitars & a stoned haze of production culminating in a very, sweet whole!"* - douglas t. stewart (bmx bandits/poppydisc). [poppydisc](#)

barzin : notes to an absent lover 3rd album from the canadian singer/songwriter. reflecting the highs & lows experienced by the human heart in the aftermath of a break-up, 'notes to an absent lover' balances the introspection of his earlier work with up-tempo orchestral arrangements that provide a richly melodic heartbeat to these glowing confessionals. personal but thankfully, never indulgent, the raw honesty of the lyrics details universal themes of sorrow, regret & anger, evoking all the vulnerability & shifting emotions of a failed relationship. from the gentle, grieving steel guitar of 'soft summer girls' to the defiantly aggressive drumbeats of 'look what love has turned us into', this album brings new textures & colours to barzin's palette. in addition to karen graves' string arrangements, splashes of vibraphone, pedal steel & banjo surface amid the traditional guitars, bass & drums. in harmony with the sentiment guiding them, the musicians display a graceful empathy while barzin's voice & words take centre stage. [monotreme](#)

sergeant buzfuz : high slang the 4th album from sergeant buzfuz, is an eclectic mash-up of pop, psychedelia, celtic folk, punk, improv, drone-rock & remix culture. after 2 solo albums as sergeant buzfuz joe murphy released 2006's acclaimed 'the jewelled carriageway' with a band line-up of drums, cello, violin & dulcimer on the blang label, an offshoot of the yorkshireman's monthly blang nights at london's 12 bar club. 'high slang' sees the buzfuz sound fortified by the addition of john paul jones (not that one though!) on bass & the studio drumming of death in vegas' ian button. *"like the soft boys, this is unselfconsciously smart-pop, with a noir-psychedelic twist"* - sounds xp, *"absolutely brilliant"* tom robinson - bbc, *"i love its spirit, i love the idea behind it, i love the fact that it's like nothing else i've ever heard"* - mark lamarr, *"like the pogues beating up my life story....single of the month by a mile"* - playlouder. [blang](#)

death : for the whole world to see add another name to the list of classic proto-punk groups from detroit - death. inspired by some of classic rock's heroes, death riff-rocked with minimal leads at maximum heat, a la fred 'sonic' smith or mc5. following their 1974 demo, the band were given an audition with don davis, whose chart-topping work with stax acts johnnie taylor & the dramatics had made him a local celebrity. davis booked the band into his united sound recording studio (one of detroit's main destinations for aspiring blues, r&b & soul musicians) & they recorded the tracks that make up this album with engineer jim vitti, whose work with parliament/funkadelic seemed to inform his decision to record death in raw fashion with little polish, showcasing the organic power relationships within the trio. 'for the whole world to see' was a fresh & inspired early entry in the category of punk rock & is the first full-length release ever for death. the band only released one 7" single, 'politicians in my eyes' / 'keep on knocking', which now sells for \$1000 a copy. [drag city](#)

loren connors & jim o'rourke : two nice catholic boys together, connors-o'rourke unravel slow motion venusian style blues to thundering, feedback splattered grooves across 3 extended pieces. this record represents a beautiful collaborative effort between two closely tied musical experimentalists. the spontaneous melodies shift from devastating, country road intimacy to hypnotic overamped rock. this live cd is only the 2nd duo release by these musical partners despite performing together since the mid-90s. "somehow these 2, whose typical musical pursuits often differ widely in nature, have managed to form a musical relationship that allows each to expand their standard repertoire in a creative & enriching way. the results make for great listening" - brainwashed. [family vineyard](#)

azita : how will you? a 4-piece centered around singer songwriter azita youssefi. over the course of 2 previous albums & an ep, this chicago resident has quietly made a name for herself with her intimate songs & breathy vocals. this sparkling new album is her 4th for drag city & is a collection of songs that range from sun-bright & poppy to deeply focused. it features contributions from some of chicago's finest musicians including an all-star chicago rhythm section of matt lux (isotope 217, iron & wine, plush) on bass, john herndon (tortoise, bumps) on drums & emmett kelly (bonnie 'prince' billy) on guitar. azita's powerful keyboarding has earned her guest spots on albums & tours by bonnie 'prince' billy, silver jesus, weird war & others. [drag city](#)

mgr y destructo swarmbots : amigos de la guitarra a brand new collaboration from mgr (mike gallagher of isis) & destructo swarmbots (mike mare). the album was recorded at deadverse studios in downtown union city, new jersey with alap momin a.k.a oktopus from noisy hip-hop revolutionaries dalek. consisting of a single 42-minute song entitled 'amor en el aire', this record is a glorious journey through epic guitar soundscapes & soaring synths, reminiscent of oren ambarchi & fennesz. [neurot](#)

emeralds / pain jerk : european tour 2009 (very limited – 500 copies only) to celebrate their european tour together this month, the astoundingly prodigious trio from ohio & the punishing japanese noise legend take a track each on this 500-copies only cd. emeralds' track 'landlocked' journeys further through the planet they share with popol vuh & terry riley, then is violently usurped by pain jerk's aptly titled 'berserker', which features rudolf eb.er & mai sau in a noise/voice/aktion showdown. [no fi](#)

sam kills two : sam kills two rocket girl signed the band on the spot, the 1st time they heard them & now, a year later, they deliver their debut album. the band's collective range of influences includes the red house painters, warren zevon, leonard cohen & elliot smith. combined with their diverse personalities & backgrounds (& a sprinkle of old fashioned fairy dust), these are all factors in their complex & emotive song-writing. fred's cadenced vocals & skt's trademark arpeggiated acoustic guitars cross with unexpectedly heavy electric tones, deep piano & driving beats. the result is a dynamic yet strangely fragile sound. [rocketgirl](#)

stinking lizaveta : sacrifice & bliss the philly rock trio return with their 6th album. the instrumental trio specialize in insane improvisations, relentless rhythms & volumes of groove. if you're tired of the stale sludge that passes for modern metal, the sparkling crunch of stinking liz's latest may well restore your faith in rock & roll. "compelling melody. hypnotizing rhythm. passion & detail" – according to the band, this is the mission underlying 'sacrifice & bliss'. the la times has hailed the veteran rockers as "both polished & unruly" & this album excels on both counts with crisp production, massive beats & dazzling fretwork. [monotreme](#)

steve cradock : the kundalini target heralded as one of the pioneers of the brit-pop scene & one of the uk's greatest guitar players, the ocean colour scene guitarist steve cradock releases his debut solo album. unsurprisingly, 'the kundalini target' features a guest appearance from paul weller. liam gallagher has issued his royal seal of approval, citing cradock as a "modern day george harrison". "one might expect an album from the lead guitarist of one of the uk's most prominent acts of the 90s to be shamelessly self absorbed, full of wah-pedal induced chaos & 5 minute guitar solos.....this is not the case. although cradock admittedly plays all the instruments on the album, this is not an indulgence; the product is a heartfelt sound steeped in sincerity...cradock's craft is in song writing & this is what he demonstrates" – the music mag. [moseley shoals](#)

wet paint : it rots it would be easy to liken wet paint's bedraggled image & slacker aesthetic to the scene that once brought to prominence bands such as pavement & dinosaur jr. but being slack is one thing that the 4 members of wet paint cannot be accused of in their freshman year. 'it rots' was predominantly recorded live in a 2 day session in a studio in whitechapel, with blue states main man andy dragazis, a work ethic inspired by the michael azzerad book "our band could be your life" & by the gung ho manner in which husker du appeared to approach their work. their bold versatility leaves no room for boredom, with honest & unfettered vocals tightly wrapped in a thick blanket of raw & relentless riffola. having pillaged members from loved alt country band absentee & post-rocking economy wolf, wet paint have been plucked by bloc party from a very respectable crowd & chosen as support for their first uk tour of 2009. "wet paint reminded me it doesn't have to be bull shit all the time" steven adams (broken family band). [trial & error](#)

miranda lee richards : light of x a moody & introspective, album shimmering with folk, country, psychedelic & even classical influences. it features a top-notch group of musicians & is produced by rick parker (brmc, the von bondies). the album balances miranda's beautiful, close to the heart vocals with music that has the wide open, spacious feel of a desert sky or an empty church: call it ambient americana, or miranda's self coined term "psychedelic chamber folk rock", 'light of x' is full of love & loss, desolation & salvation. "glorious sun-dappled cosmic country...like mazy star blinking into the morning light" – nme, "a soft, sweet, sirenesque voice adorning beautiful melodies, wistful, poetic lyrics & aural textures" - the guardian. [netwerk](#)

the only ones the epitome of the so called 80's "cult" band - underground luminaries, beloved by critics & rock connoisseurs, their influence still resounds to this day. led by the raffish & slightly scuzzy romance-obsessed peter perrett, the only ones were one of the punk era's most underrated bands. not as confrontational as the sex pistols, as politically indulgent as the clash, or as stripped-down as the ramones, the only ones played not-so-fast guitar rock that sounded deeply indebted to the new york dolls & other mid-70s proto-punks. all 3 albums have been re-issued, re-mastered & each original album now has 3 bonus tracks. [sony bmg](#)

: the only ones the only ones' 1978 self-titled debut is regarded as a classic of the first wave of u.k. punk despite the presence of the midtempo jazz-accented 'breaking down', the 50's pop moves of the opening cut, 'the whole of the law', 'the beast', which sounds like some sort of lethargic neo-boogie & the graceful semi-acoustic semi-samba 'no peace for the wicked'. of course, when the only ones felt like rocking out, they did it brilliantly & along with the instant classic 'another girl, another planet', this album includes the sinister but rollicking 'city of fun' & the feedback-drenched crunch of 'the immortal story', which points to another factor that made the only ones heroes in their day - their eclecticism was rooted in a genuine talent for embracing different sounds rather than the inability to pick a style & master it. 4.5/5 – *all music guide*. [sony bmg](#)

: even serpents shine following the positive critical reception afforded to their first album, the band again opted to produce their 2nd album themselves. it was a wise move. many still regard this as the defining statement from a band which cleverly trod the line between punk & older genres. 'even serpents shine' seems slightly more coherent than their eponymous debut as it reigns in the genre experimentation. "only a shade removed from the standard of the debut lp" 4/5 – *all music guide*. [sony bmg](#)

: babys got a gun the punk/alternative band's 3rd & final album, originally released in 1980. conventional wisdom says that 'baby's got a gun' is the weakest of the 3 only ones studio albums & although it does have the most filler of any of them, there are spectacular highs here, such as 'why don't you kill yourself?', 'me & my shadow', 'oh lucinda' & best of all, 'the big sleep'. "less consistent than their first 2 efforts, it's still rewarding" – *all music guide*. [sony bmg](#)

van morrison : astral weeks - live at the hollywood bowl recorded in 1968 when the belfast-bred, blues-rock music legend van morrison was just 22 years old, astral weeks immediately received critical acclaim & continues to be cited as one of the greatest albums of the rock era. subsequently the album has been ranked on numerous best albums of all time lists, including #19 on rolling stone's 500 greatest albums of all time. both 'astral weeks' & 'moondance' (morrison's next album) were inducted in the grammy hall of fame. 'astral weeks' became a cult favourite & was regarded almost as a musical religion to many artists. on november 7 & 8, 2008, four decades later to the day, at the age 63, van morrison revisited 'astral weeks' live, in its entirety, at the hollywood bowl & delivered a jaw-dropping, awe-inspiring performance. [blue note](#)

ida maria : fortress around my heart ida maria reissues her 2008 debut album with 2 new tracks & all new artwork. the new tracks show a more reflective side to ida & showcase the breadth of her musical talent. ida maria sivertsen, the scandinavian sensation whose combination of raw garage rock, hummable choruses, gamine good looks & deliberately provocative lyrical themes have seen her swiftly become an indie favourite. with a powerful voice that conjures so many classic-rock associations, it's a wonder she doesn't get lost amid all the references; she howls like janis joplin, rasps like courtney love, similarly steeped in cigarettes & alcohol but without the manic aversion to actually making music. all in all, an assured debut that's bound to please pop & indie fans alike. "an accomplished debut" – *pitchfork*, 4/5 – *q*. [waterfall](#)

golden dawn : power plant (limited edition deluxe digi-book) the rare texan psychedelic classic from 1967. international artists records produced some of the most innovative records to come out of texas's thriving rock scene of the late 60s. one of the most influential independent record companies of its day, it has gained cult status over the years amongst fans of prime american psychedelic & garage rock. one of the label's groundbreaking acts were the golden dawn, who only released this one album (& no singles) during their short recording career & they broke up soon after the album's release. an acknowledged psych classic, 'power plant' is now being re-issued. the album features inspired acid-spiked folk rock guitars & intelligent psychedelic-inspired lyrics. the emotional range is remarkable for a debut album - from the searing acid punk of 'evolution', through the classic pop-inflected psych of 'my time' into the brooding introspection of 'reaching out to you'. the accompanying 16-page illustrated booklet includes an insightful interview with the group's leader & driving force, george kinney, in which he gives an unique track-by-track run-down of the album's songs. [charly](#)

the bubble puppy : a gathering of promises (limited edition deluxe digi-book) 1969 psych classic including 8 bonus tracks. the bubble puppy were international artists's 2nd biggest act in terms of chart action after the 13th floor elevators & enjoyed a degree commercial success with their distinct high-energy, hippy rock-pop sound & look. formed in san antonio in 1967, their first 45 waxing, the brilliant hendrix-inspired 'hot smoke & sassafras', combined hard rock with fresh vocal harmonies & reached #14 in the u.s. charts in march 1969. the resultant album from that year, 'a gathering of promises', featured more of the same raw, garage-psych sound & was equally strong, somewhat removed from the deep acid psych of the elevator's 'easter everywhere' or the golden dawn's 'power plant' albums, it is a highly enjoyable album & stands as one of the label's most refined rock efforts. the accompanying 16-page illustrated booklet features unique quotes about the band, the music & the times from original band member david fore, who was specially interviewed for this release. [charly](#)

zero boys : history of / vicious circle

timely reissue & the 1st 'official release' of 2 classic us punk rock records from the zero boys, who are hailed as the finest of the original mid-west hardcore bands. from '79 through to '83, the zero boys ruled the mid-west hardcore scene. 'vicious circle' is their debut lp whilst 'history of' is the 1st release of their "lost" 2nd album, re-mastered from the original tapes. liner notes are provided by jack rabid. whilst contemporaries concentrated on aggression & turbo-charged ferocity, the zero boys pointed a way to a scene which could include melodicism, intelligence & rock 'n' roll suss. craig finn of the hold steady has written a feature about this band (as one of his primary cd influences) for the guardian. [secretly canadian](#)

magazine : touch & go – anthology

(2cd) to coincide with magazine's first uk tour since 1981, emi are releasing a "definitive" double-disc anthology featuring tracks from all of the band's 4 albums in chronological order. if you're looking for a good introduction to magazine then this will do the job perfectly, covering all eras of the band's music & offering b-sides & non-album singles to whet the appetite. [virgin](#)

the who : live at the isle of white festival 1970

(2cd) unavailable for some considerable time, eagle records are now making available once again - the double cd set of the complete performance by the who at the isle of wight festival in 1970 in the original running order of the live show. the sound has been remastered by long time who sound man jon astley & is now better than ever. featuring the original classic line-up of pete townshend, roger daltrey, keith moon & john Entwistle, the who's performance at the isle of wight is rightly celebrated as one of their finest ever & this cd shows exactly why. this legendary who concert performance features virtually the whole of 'tommy' & many other classics including 'my generation', 'substitute', 'i can't explain' & 'magic bus'. [eagle](#)

southside johnny & the asbury jukes : jukes; the new jersey collection

(3cd) specially priced 3 cd set containing 3 albums only previously available via the bands website : 'messin' with the blues', 'going to jukesville' & 'into the harbour'. [evangeline](#)

dance / electronica

v/a : fabriclive44: commix

the ever reliable fabric series continues to deliver fresh tins of dance delights, with this mix coming from cambridge drum & bass boffs commix. renowned for their deep, soulful (or what once would have been branded 'intelligent') form of drum & bass, they've appeared on pretty much every decent d&b label around, including metalheadz, hospital, good looking, 31, creative source & more, with their visionary productions becoming a staple tool in djs' boxes around the world; likewise, commix have found themselves becoming a standard fix on international dancefloors with a profusion of gigs, exploring every d&b scene across europe, asia, north america, australia & beyond. this excellent mix gathers up tracks from the likes of rufige crew, calibre, jonny l, photek & logistics as well as their own surefire productions. [fabric](#)

yukse : away from the sea

you'd be forgiven for thinking yukse might hail from somewhere exotic like turkey (indeed my informative research tells me yukse means 'high' in turkish), however take one listen to this chap's vocodered electro funk & you realise he's more french than a well sported beret. apparently, he's recently been busy playing with the parts of mika, the kaiser chiefs, chromeo & others & now steps up to deliver his 1st solo album. like his fellow countrymen daft punk & justice, this is a heady gallic dance confection that heads straight to the party, devastating dancefloors left, right & centre. if you like the aforementioned, or perhaps soulwax, chromeo & digitalism, then this could be for you. [polydor](#)

ceephax : drive time

one wonders what on earth the jenkinsons put in their kids' food, as brothers tom & andy have both grown up to be producers of some of the most warped experimental electronic fare around, as squarepusher & ceephax respectively. 'drive time' was originally released in 2000 on a very limited tape cassette which accompanied ceephax's debut self-titled album. since then it's been much sought after, only now resurfacing fully remastered. working almost as a library record, with the fragmented format constructed from some 27 tracks mastered from the original cassette & ranging in sonic quality from roughly playable to purposefully lo-fi acid experimentalism, & covering ground from queasy ambient in a v/vm style to sketchy acid jackers in the well trodden tradition of ceephax. [first cask](#)

hip hop

odd nosdam : t.i.m.e. soundtrack

former clouddead member odd nosdam returns with a soundtrack created for the element skateboards film 'this is my element'. but don't let the soundtrack tag put you off, this is a great album of gritty, lo-fi, forward-thinking instrumental hip hop that the likes of mr nosdam exceed at. utilizing plenty of fuzzy lo-bit guitar, static textures, & proper heavy beats, this is a decidedly upbeat, mobile & spontaneous album that i'd imagine fits perfectly with its subject matter. quality off-key hip hop that anticon have become renowned for, for fans of clouddead, boards of canada & prefuse 73. [anticon](#)

jurassic 5 : j5

(2cd/dvd) poor old jurassic 5, they're getting on a bit now & clearly thinking about that retirement fund, so what better way to top it up than by getting out that stool & giving the cash cow a good milk for a few more pennies. 'j5' was in fact their debut ep, released in 1997, which then got re-released with a few extra tracks as their debut album, & now it's back again, ever expanding, including a bonus disc of rarities plus a live dvd with footage from their 1st global tour. all sarcasm aside, it is a great record & amidst all the po-faced blinging of hip hop today is refreshingly upbeat & funk-fueled. [decon](#)

soul/funk

candi staton : who's hurting now? holy cow, this lady has got a voice on her!. it's rough & ready to roll & shows no sign of tiring as her career matures. this is a country/blues tinged soul selection with tracks written by bonnie 'prince' billy & mary gauthier & it's jam packed with sentiment & perfect delivery that reflects her southern gospel roots. produced by mark nevers (lambchop, silver Jews) at his home studio in nashville, this has the loose feel of a fine group of musicians having fun & at the helm is candi herself. "staton's voice remains a quintessentially southern blend of pain & defiance" – guardian. [honest jon's](#)

anthony joseph & the spasm band : bird head son anthony joseph is a busy man. after coming to england from trinidad in 1989 he has written four books & lectures in creative writing as well as the music. he delivers a sharp burst to the senses provoking the body movements his band's name suggests. it is a delicious mix of voodoo funk & spiritual soul combined with spoken word to invoke the spirit of black music pioneers like gil scott heron, the last poets & pharoah sanders. 'flirting with ethiopian jazz, nigerian afrobeat & james brown's garage funk' - ****uncut. [naïve](#)

india arie : testimony vol.2: love & politics back with her 4th album, india arie sits herself squarely down on the seat marked soul diva & not that she has anything to prove, she will give rihanna et al a run for their money. there is some smart production & some dapper acoustic guitars that combined with her beautiful soulful delivery, make this a stimulating listen. "studied songwriter & guitar player rooted in the r&b, soul, motown, & blues of the past, but grounded in the post-hip-hop urban world of today" – all music guide. [universal / island](#)

ernie k doe : here come the girls one of the biggest acts to come out of new orleans, ernie k doe teamed up with the legendary producer alan toussaint in 1959 & here are some of the fruits of their labour. perhaps best known now for the song 'here come the girls' but with an impressive back catalogue, this is a must for soul/funk fans. [evangeline](#)

v/a : curtom funk from the late 60's & throughout the 70's curtom records was responsible for some of the finest funk & soul music of the era - recordings especially admired for their sophisticated arrangements & production values. owned & operated by the legendary curtis mayfield & featuring performances from the man himself, either solo or with the impressions, as producer, arranger, player or writer, as well as tracks from the label's other main players & hit makers, such as leroy hutson, baby huey, the natations & linda clifford. this set also features several gems & sought-after rarities from its less well-known talents. [charly](#)

blues

charlie parr : roustabout parr's 7th album of raw, soul-piercing piedmont-style blues, is a true joy to behold. only 3 of these 12 finger-picked guitar & banjo tracks are traditionals arranged by parr, but you'd never know it. the feeling, experience & sheer talent ranks parr's compositions right up there with the classics. it's no surprise that he counts among his fans the illustrator r.crumb & slow-core rockers low. his authentic voice & the utter lack of pretence of the music is what makes him truly special & sets him apart from the likes of superstar seasick steve. his songs are records of the journeys, troubles & experiences of real people, created in the american folk & blues tradition. to see this man perform live is an awe-inspiring thing so be sure to catch him next time he's in town. highly recommended by us & for fans of blind willie johnson, charlie patton, john fahey, bukka white & seasick steve. "so many country-blues artists are crippled with retroism & purism, but he has brought wonder & excitement to this music. even charlie's foot coming down on the floor boards screams with more soul & life than most anything - past or future" – alan sparrowhawk, low. [misplaced music](#)

ruthie foster : the truth according to ruthie foster foster is a dynamic singer, songwriter, performer of a unique mix of folk, soul, blues, gospel, r&b & a liberal dose of grit. recorded at ardent in memphis with a stunning assemblage of musicians including guitarist robben ford (black crowes), keyboardist jim dickinson (aretha franklin, rolling stones) & the memphis horns. "foster's deeply soulful vocals dip into gospel & swing toward contemporary folk with r&b panache. when she sings a cappella, the heavens part" – chronicle. [proper records](#)

joe hill louis : king of the one man bands the title of this album is not an over estimation. joe hill louis played a blistering racket of one man blues & would surely be better known if not for his death, at the age of 35, from tetanus in 1957. it is raw & rocking & a must for fans of howlin' wolf or present artists such as seasick steve & son of dave. [jsp](#)

v/a : nick cave - the roots of nick cave, in his various incarnations, has taken us many places & this collection brings together some of the inspiration for those journeys. this collection of 22 varied cuts travels from rock 'n' roll through swamp voodoo to blues, gospel, country, hokey hillbilly & folk, doffing a cap to murder ballads, tales of yearning & loss & the sensuality of other's lives. features carl perkins, little richard, leadbelly, screamin' jay hawkins, gene vincent & more. [complete blues](#)

v/a : the black crowes - the roots of chris robinson was just 23 when the black crowes broke big. weaned on blues records & turned onto even more by the cavalcade of rock legends he met, he has eclectic taste & can spin a good bluesy yarn. undoubtedly, the singer is a man inspired &, this collection is just some of his inspiration -from john lee hooker & robert johnson to 'sleepy' john estes & jimmie rodgers. [complete blues](#)

v/a : the white stripes - the roots of without a shadow of doubt, meg & jack white's guttural garage punk owes a lot to the vintage music of america from leadbelly onwards. indeed, a cursory listen to any of the 1940's blind willie mctell recordings in this collection give more than an indication of where jack white was coming from in both vocal delivery & musical texture. this album is a testament to the people who inspired them & features johnny cash, john lee hooker, gene vincent, blind willie mctell, leadbelly, robert johnson & more. [complete blues](#)

folk

john mccusker : under one sky undoubtedly modern folk music is an exciting thing at the moment & violinist john mccusker has a rather natty way of getting involved. here he has put together an album made of 7 suites with an array of singers performing their socks off. julie fowlis, john tams, jim causley, roddy woomble & graham coxon all make vocal contributions. fiddles & pipes, tragedies & triumphs all play out in this wonderfully executed folk triumph. *"whether taken together or separately, this release could serve as a primer for anyone wanting to get an inkling as to what makes the contemporary folk scene as exciting as it is."* – [bbc navigator](#)

world

v/a : strictly samba samba has breathed a rhythmic pulse into brazil for the last 100 years & this demonstrates the finest modern sambas. featuring exceptional talents seu jorge, roge, teresa cristina alongside legendary sambistas elza soares, trio mocoto, the ipanemas & azymuth. 'strictly' is the second in far out's genre series, following 2008's hugely successful 'far out bossa nova'. [far out recordings](#)

baaba maal : on the road collated from shows over the last 10 years it demonstrates why baaba maal is one of africa's true international stars, his career now stretches back over two decades & his concerts have a rare ability to transcend cultures & expectations, a music simultaneously rooted in the ancient african soils while fuelled by the burgeoning vitality & sheer inventiveness of the continent's people. *"one of the finest singers in the world, & he's currently on brilliant live form - as shown by those memorable impromptu collaborations with anyone from toumani diabate to franz ferdinand at the africa express shows"* – [4/5 guardian. palm pictures](#)

reggae

v/a : andy smith - greensleeves document portishead's official dj & club legend dj andy smith's 'document' series, has been warmly received by critics & fans alike. now, he takes on the mighty greensleeves back catalogue for another sound system styled reggae mix cd, in a similar vein to his previous 'trojan document' release. on his latest triumph, andy enlists the help of mc brother culture on the mic, even having him lay down vocals over classic greensleeves tracks. andy gives us the full live sound system experience complete with rewinds, shout outs & full on reverb effects. features classic tracks from wailing souls, scientist, barrington levy, augustus pablo, johnny osbourne, half pint, jacob miller & more. [greensleeves](#)

anthony b : rise up anthony b (real name - keith blair), is back with another album for greensleeves records. this is his 4th collaboration with producer frenchie, who also brought us 1996's 'real revolution', 2005's 'black star' & 2007's 'higher meditation'. this release maintains a more roots vibe than his previous albums. with three duets, with chezidek, lukie d & the legendary horace andy (who made plenty of hits for coxone dodd's studio one & more recently collaborated with massive attack). musicians who appear on the album include the cream of jamaican talent, from sly & robbie, lenky, dalton brownie, christopher birch, the firehouse crew & mafia & fluxy. well-produced modern roots reggae. [greensleeves](#)

vinyl

nodzzz : nodzzz this is hipper than thou/hotter than whatever new spuzz out from the usa.....please welcome nodzzz, from san francisco, ca. they're sweet dudes with an even sweeter sound, first honed on a killer single released on eric's make a mess imprint. barely 3 minutes long, each side tore the face off of the last days of 2007, revealing a candy skeleton that had the modern lovers' teeth marks in it. the group's self-titled debut is a real grower, with 10 new songs in a markedly more pop direction, whilst still maintaining their lo-fi pop aesthetic. you can hear 3 guys examining where punk became something more, between notions of power pop & advanced songwriting on the embarrassment/big dipper/pointed sticks axis, but with the economy of the minutemen or beat happening. they're in & out before you know it (these 10 songs clock in at under 16 minutes), having firmly planted the seeds of catchy melodies between your ears. *"where other groups look to nuggets & back from the grave for inspiration, these guys draw upon stiff records, pub rock & the earliest british new wave of the 70s - nick lowe & elvis costello are accurate reference points"* - [pitchfork. whats your rupture?](#)

devendra banhart : smokey rolls down thunder canyon (ultra limited vinyl – 100 only) xl

jay reatard : matador singles '08 (limited 180g lp) [matador](#)

larkin gimm : parplar [young god records](#)

titus andronicus : the airing of grievances [merok](#)

d v d s

bellowhead : live at the shepherds bush empire the riotous, carnival folk big band are captured live during their burlesque tour at their sold-out london shepherds bush empire show on september 26th 2007. this is the first ever official dvd from the much loved 11-piece group. in addition to the 98 minute concert, the dvd follows the group off stage & on the road with over an hour of bonus documentaries & interviews. [westpark](#)

m a g s

plan b : issue 42 bat for lashes, the thing, telepathe, frida hyvonen, marissa nadler, black milk, terry lynn...

s i n g l e s

single of the week

crystal stiltz : departure limited 7". [angular recording corporation](#)

cherbourg : last chapter of dreaming ep limited 10", available in selected shops only. [chess club](#)

jack peñate : tonight's today limited 12", available in selected shops only. [young turks](#)

esiotrot / foxes! : split limited 7", available in selected shops only. [sounds experience](#)

james yuill : no surprise very limited 7". [moshi moshi](#)

killers : spaceman 7" picture disc. [mercury](#)

morrissey : i'm throwing my arms around paris 7" & 2 x cd. [polydor](#)

chapters / dean mcphée : split limited 7". [world in winter](#)

topaz rags : tarot harem very limited 7". [not not fun](#)

bottin : no static limited 12". [italians do it better](#)

heloise & the savoir faire : illusions (hot tonight!!) limited pink 7". [simian/yep roc](#)

the officers : red chapter 7". [propaganda](#)

p r e - o r d e r s

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