

o u t t h i s w e e k

albums of the week

jarvis cocker : further complications (cd & lp) well, you couldn't have made it up...what an awesome pairing of legends this is! jarvis hooks up with the one & only steve albini to record his 2nd solo album, resulting in a record that hits harder than you'd expect. he has seldom rocked as hard as this but it suits him down to the ground & it articulates his current preoccupation with sex exceptionally well. let's make no bones about it – jarvis wants to get down. in his own words, "i'm not looking for a relationship, just a willing receptacle"! if it wasn't for his way with words & a tune then we would all be mildly embarrassed but like nick cave before him, midlife lust suits him well & as unexpected as an cocker/albini union was, now we have got it, we couldn't imagine a world with out it. highly recommended. "a filthy rock n roll album" 4/5 – uncut, "jarv recruits steve albini & goes all alt-rock on us. why didn't anyone hook 'em up sooner?!" - nme [rough trade](#)

the field : yesterday & today (cd & 2lp) the field's debut album 'from here we go sublime' switched new audiences onto the potential of ambient techno, to the music's ability to transport a listener to some fresh state of escapist revelry with its mix of beat minimalism & expressive textures. following up a record with that much acclaim was never going to be an easy task but thankfully axel willner's done it again. here he expands his palette, continuing the oblique sampling strategy of his debut while building up the rhythmic architecture. the album features guest musicians & on the title track willner collaborates with battles/helmet drummer john stanier, further emphasising the fact that the field are just as comfortable with an atp-style indie crowd as a dance crowd at fabric. this is epic, beguiling ambient house at its most awesome. "second albums are a difficult beast - it's hard to please everyone without simply repeating yourself but willner has exceeded his debut in every way" – boomkat. [kompakt](#)

patrick watson : wooden arms he may not be able to escape comparisons to jeff buckley's angelic pipes but with this, his 3rd album, the highly acclaimed canadian musical alchemist really takes large steps to create his own musical universe. this bewitching set of baroque pop songs corrals junkyard percussion, rococo strings & that ethereal voice of his with ease. in fact, watson may visit some of the same carnivals, fairs & circuses tom waits seems to draw inspiration from, though he seems a deal more well-adjusted! these songs gently levitate a few feet off the ground & as they weave their spell, gradually lift you up with them. imagine if you will jeff buckley (yes, him again) fronting grizzly bear & you're getting there . a really special album, highly recommended for fans of dm stith or andrew bird. [peacefrog](#)

rock / indie / modern classical

manic street preachers : journal for plague lovers (standard cd/limited 2cd with original demos & richie edwards original lyrics & artwork / lp) so, after all these years with richie "officially" declared dead, the remaining manics finally feel able to use the lyrics that he left behind. the press have concentrated on the obvious 'holy bible' comparisons, hardly avoidable & deliberately alluded to, from the jenny saville artwork on the cover to the use of the 'holy bible' typeface. that album was largely produced by the band but they've turned to steve albini for most of this one. it's definitely their harshest album since 'the holy bible' & james' (successful as ever) attempts to fit richie's lyrics with the music & liberal use of abrasive punk/metal guitar tones, certainly hark back to that defining album. however, there's also a lot of the sound of the 'everything must go' richie tracks & the harshness is given a richer finish with strings & dave eringa's additional production. they'll never make another 'holy bible' but it's definitely their best album in years. [columbia](#)

a hawk & a hacksaw : deliverance (cd & lp + a free poster, while they last) for their 4th album, jeremy barnes (neutral milk hotel) & heather trost followed their balkan hearts to hungary, relocating for several months to budapest. 'délivrance' was recorded in budapest, devon & albuquerque around the core of the hun hangár ensemble, who originally teamed up with the duo for that brilliant limited edition cd/dvd in 2007. the recordings feature some incredible musicians, such as kálmán balogh, one of the very best cimbalom players in the world, who adds some real sparkle to the recordings. a welcome reminder of what a vibrant & talented partnership this is. for fans of beirut, calexico & the kronos quartet. "blends klezmer, polka, gypsy folk music & various other forms into a dizzy whirlwind of dance music, with touches of mexican mariachi creeping in occasionally" – independent. [the leaf label](#)

sunn 0))) : monoliths & dimensions the 7th studio album from the dark lords finds stephen o'malley & greg anderson not only hooking up with longtime collaborators attila csihar, oren ambarchi & earth's dylan carlson but also greatly expanding their sound with personnel from beyond their usual circle of doom-dealing metallurgists. julian priester (who has worked with sun ra, john coltrane & herbie hancock) joins the awesome composer eyving kang to flesh out the usual line-up, alongside an upright bass trio, french & english horns, a harp & flute duo, piano, brass, reed & string ensembles & a viennese female choir. these embellishments of their usual idiom of low frequency drones & glacial guitar motions, add a whole other dimension to the band's sonic vocabulary but this is not "sunn 0))) with strings" or "metal meets orchestra" material - this is something altogether more exciting. a phenomenal beast of a record! "a doom masterwork" 4/5 – mojo. [southern lord](#)

my latest novel : deaths & entrances this astonishing scottish 5-piece made one of our favourite albums of the last few years when they released the astonishing 'wolves' in 2006 & they were then being hailed as the scottish answer to arcade fire. these bohemian harbingers of breezy folk melodies make outstanding songs complimented by violins, xylophones & undulating percussion. their sophomore effort marks the band's exploration of a bigger, bolder, fuller sound & the record has definitely been created with bigger stages in mind but don't worry - the breathtaking melodies, gorgeous harmonies & sweeping arrangements are still here a plenty. *"magnificent enough in scope to attract comparisons to funeral-era arcade fire. although the album is immediately likable, it is held together by so many bits & pieces that it demands repeated listens. definitely one of the year's best (so far)"* 89% - [thelineofbestfit](#). [bella union](#)

passion pit : manners this debut full-length album is the follow up to 6 track ep, 'chunk of change', which was largely recorded solo by michael angelakos on his laptop, giving it a lo-fi personal feel. the ep was considered such a success that he formed a band & 'manners' is the result. the album sees the massachusetts based 5-piece head into the studio & come out with a polished set of dancefloor friendly tracks. keeping the mix of glitchy samples, falsetto vocals & summery, feel good tunes it manages to build on the charm of their quirky debut ep. *"at its most adventurous, it sounds like little else – a pop record that exists in a world of its own"* 9/10 – *dis*, *"one foot in the skronky, shambling lo-fi underground & one in the flashing-lights big-room dance-pop overground"* – *pitchfork*. [columbia](#)

british sea power : man of aran (cd & dvd) 'man of aran' is an award winning 1934 dramatised documentary by robert j flaherty. who better to write a new soundtrack for this depiction of man's daily struggle against the elements than professional woolly sock wearers, british sea power? the result is generally a long way from the epic sound usually associated with the band, instead they've come up with a more gentle, introspective sound in keeping with the harsh, bleak environment of the film, only occasionally raising the tempo & the volume. it may not sound much like a british sea power album but it's highly recommended both for the documentary & the questions it raises about the 'truthfulness' of film making & the music which stands up on its own, especially if you're interested in the more introspective ends of the post rock sound. [rough trade](#)

iron & wine : around the well (2cd & lp) collecting songs ranging from out-of-print to never-before-released, 'around the well' spans iron & wine's earliest sessions (which yielded the band's debut - 2002's 'the creek drank the cradle') through to material recorded for 2007's 'the shepherd's dog'. the collection is broken up into 2 sections. the 1st half is an assortment of hushed home recordings, unedited & raw & the 2nd highlights moments captured in the confines of studios with the help of other musicians, friends & engineers. the title comes from a line in the song 'the trapeze swinger', a fan favourite which was used in the movie 'in good company'. 3 more songs written for the film finally make their appearance here as well. this collection also brings together hard-to-find covers such as the flaming lips' 'waitin' for a superman' & new order's 'love vigilantes', along with one of iron & wine's earliest originals, 'sacred vision'. a fan essential! [sub pop](#)

current 93 : aleph at hallucinatory mountain the long-awaited new album from current 93, following on from the dark masterpiece 'black ships ate the sky'. this album represents a progression of the dark folk-tinged doom that tibet has been pursuing in the latter part of current 93's 26 year career but on a much grander scale - it's pretty damn heavy! david has brought together an amazing & bizarre array of talents from artists as varied as nurse with wound's stapleton & liles, rock god phenomenon andrew w.k., haunting chanteuse & composer baby dee, grammy award-winning rickie lee jones, the beautiful hush arbor's keith wood, guitar-hero james blackshaw, nyc legend matt sweeney, extraordinary percussionist alex neilson, heavenly cellist john contreras & many more.....the result is an album like no other. [coptic cat](#)

tori amos : abnormally attracted to sin (standard cd or deluxe cd/dvd) this is the 10th album from the venerated, idiosyncratic & controversial singer-songwriter. exploring amos' perennial favourite themes of religion, sexuality & power, it sees her returning to the lush sound of 2005's 'the beekeeper'. produced by amos & recorded at her home studio in cornwall with her husband, engineer mark hawley, it's another story-telling album of baroque-pop numbers filled with all the instruments she could muster, along with her inimitable cracking vocals. it's a wee bit long at 73 minutes but fans will revel in this 18 track epic. the strictly limited version includes a dvd with 14 original video pieces to accompany the album tracks. [island](#)

au revoir simone : still night, still light brooklyn's charming synth-pop trio comprised of 3 keyboard-curious ladies, deliver their wonderful 3rd album. gone are the bells & whistles of breakthrough album 'the bird of music' & in their place, is a stark closeness. it has some of the band's quietest moments (listen to the glacial grace of 'the last one'), whilst also containing some of their most raucous (as on the dizzying exuberance of 'anywhere you looked'). indeed, this is the band at their most exposed, relying mainly on their keyboards, drum machine & effortless voices. a glowing record awash with twinkling drones, fizzy hi-hats, warbling organs, heartbeat-esque kick drums & the girls' incandescent vocal harmonies. *"ethereal electro-pop perfect for a lazy sunday morning"* – *rolling stone*, *"make-out music for your inner android"* – *spin*. [moshi moshi](#)

lightning seeds : 4 winds the band's 6th studio album comes after ian broudie has been taking a few years working away in a behind-the-scenes role. 'four winds' consists of 10 brand new tracks that are instantly recognisable as "lightning seeds" - exquisite pop melodies, now with an additional dose of heartfelt sentiment but less of the sing-a-long pop songs that he's become known for. *"a subdued, melancholy record, reflecting on mortality & ageing...with broudie's meditations set to lilting, gentle psychedelic pop...gorgeous stuff though, straddling the divide between sombre & beautiful with an easy grace"* 4/5 – *guardian*. [umtv](#)

jason lytle (grandaddy) : yours truly the commuter the somewhat sudden demise of granddaddy back in 2006 was indeed a sad thing. thankfully then, singer & main man jason lytle has returned with a solo album that sounds like, surprise surprise, a brand new granddaddy album. all the traditional granddaddy-isms are in place: lamenting pianos, battered synths, mid-pace tempos & of course lytle's lazy but heartfelt drawl - & like previous albums, this has a home-made lo-fi sound, giving it a very personal feel. the key to granddaddy's popularity was their happy-go-lucky demeanour, something which definitely comes across on this solo record as lytle laments his old dead pets, nature & fauna & the unreliability of people. granddaddy fans will find much to love here. *"there are enough granddaddyisms here to break a smile through the follicles"* - nme, *"necessarily learner, but sweetly melancholic alt. rock"* - uncut. [anti](#)

green day : 21st century breakdown (standard & deluxe cd) well, it's been a fair old wait but finally green day are back with their 8th studio album. the follow up to the all conquering 'american idiot' pretty much picks up where the last finished off. '21st century breakdown' is divided into three acts: 'heroes & cons', 'charlatans & saints' & 'horseshoes & handgrenades' & follows a young couple, christian & gloria, through the mess & promise of the century so far. dubya may be gone but billy joe isn't about to shy away from political causes close to his heart & it's clear there is still a fire in his belly. *"bold, ambitious & revelling in the chaos of the age... another perfect document of the times"* 4/5 - q. [reprise](#)

the wooden birds : magnolia the new project from andrew kenny, better known as the singer/songwriter behind american analog set & fans will undoubtedly recognise kenny's voice & songwriting immediately. however, the arrangements on 'magnolia' are more vocal & percussion-heavy than anything he's done before - still really gorgeous though. there's more than a suggestion of fleetwood mac in the vocal delivery but essentially this record most recalls the 'home' ep that he put out with ben gibbard (death cab for cutie/the postal service) in 2003. the line-up also features ola podrida songwriter david wingo, vocalist/guitarist /a.a.s. guest artist, leslie sisson & lymbyc system drummer, michael bell. these pared down musings should appeal to fans of kings of convenience, sufjan stevens & the aforementioned collaborators. [morr](#)

jacaszek : pentral (cd & dvd) michal jacaszek follows up last year's stunning 'treny' (no.9 in resident's end of year list), with a considerably different offering - a conceptual project attempting to describe a gothic church interior with sound. this is an uneasy but rewarding listening experience which throws you with almost overwhelming dynamic contrasts - what begins as a slow & tense build seemingly created from sample based recordings suddenly explodes into an unrelenting, shimmering wall of discordance, sounding like 100 church organs screaming out. the compositions have all the claustrophobia of the darkest end of scott walker's 'the drift', yet even in its most distressing moments there is, within the ethereal racket, something of an uplifting optimism. while there are passages of melodic beauty such as those found on 'treny', this incredible journey is more rooted in atonal explorations & as such, should appeal to fans of the caretaker, lawrence english or koen holtcamp. the dvd features a 5.1 dolby surround sound mix of the album & a documentary. [gusstaff](#)

the warlocks : the mirror explodes on the 8 songs of 'the mirror explodes', the los angeles psychedelic stalwarts' signature amalgam of white light / white heat attack, space panoramas, fuzz, melancholy & melody is present & potent but there is vivid focus too. throbbing bass lines, distant rolling thunder drums & zombie rattlesnake shake are a heartbeat of strange ominous vitality. guitars howl, slash & bounce & bobby hecksher's vocals sound oddly alone & unsettlingly intimate all at once....& the, just when you think you understand the sum of these sonic elements, they become something else entirely.... highly recommended for fans of black rebel motorcycle club, the brian jonestown massacre & the black angels. *"a wondrous aural collage, dark & melodic...a thoroughly beautiful record"* - drone magazine. [tee pee](#)

balmorhea : all is wild, all is silent austin's balmorhea's instrumental / neo-classical / experimental rock is beautiful & inviting. now expanded to a 6-piece, the band known for their understated simplicity & restraint has produced a complex album enhanced by the addition of drums & upright bass, giving their music a new found muscularity. the acoustic strummings, handclaps, plucked violins, stark piano & shimmering electric guitar create a sweeping cinematic record that suggests an instrumental version of my latest novel. for fans of eluvium, helios, sigur ros & library tapes. *"balmorhea flashes brilliance only to highlight a slow-burning constancy that's at the core of one of the year's early slow wonders"* - pitchfork, *"tender, bucolic instrumentals that waft & linger like the remnants of a summer afternoon"* - time out new york. [western vinyl](#)

tom brosseau : posthumous success for his 3rd uk release tom has largely eschewed the bare arrangements of his previous albums & drafted in help from mice parade's adam pierce & small sails' ethan rose. the fleshed out arrangements breathe fresh life into tom's idiosyncratic songs & give a tip of the hat to the pure spirit of north american blues. it is a typically straight spoken set but as always his curious way with a phrase, catches your ear every time. recommended. *"there are times when the world is too much for us, & the only respite is to be found in the company of man with an acoustic guitar & a light, clear voice. such a man is tom brosseau"* - evening standard. [fat cat](#)

john vanderslice : romanian names one of america's most hailed songwriters & lyricists returns with his most accomplished album to date. 'romanian names' is vanderslice's 7th full length album & 1st for dead ocean. it is his most poppy & accessible album yet - a perfect doorway for new listeners. this collection of character vignettes recounts the tales of, amongst others, an olympic gymnast & someone keeping themselves alive by a eucalyptus fire! its gentle, surefooted tunes often recall vanderslice's sometime touring partners, the mountain goats. *"one of indie rock's most imaginative songwriters"* - amg. [dead oceans](#)

elfin saddle : ringing for the begin again

elfin saddle is the musical project co-founded by jordan mckenzie & emi honda. elfin saddle's music is gently mystical, calmly wide-eyed & consistently guided by crystalline melodies deployed over the group's building blocks of accordion & junkyard percussion. jordan & emi trade off on these instruments & on vocal duties, with jordan singing in english & emi in japanese. supplemented by acoustic guitar, ukulele, banjo, xylophone & bells, the result is a truly unique hybrid folk music, woven from simple, insistent instrumental elements & vocal rounds. the addition of nathan gage (shapes & sizes) on double bass & tuba creates a new anchor for these magical tunes. highly recommended for fans of alexander tucker, a silver mt. zion or brighton's own eucrid euchrow. [constellation](#)

mark kozelek : lost verses live

recorded live in europe & america on mark's 2007/2008 acoustic tour accompanied only by guitarist phil carney, the material here is something of a best of mark's sun kil moon material, including 2 of the modest mouse covers from the 'tiny cities' album. there are also a couple of solo & red house painters tracks as well as his cover of stephen sondheim's 'send in the clowns'. if you're already familiar with mark's work, you'll know that like the fall (but not in sound), he's always different but always the same & this album will be an essential purchase like all his other work. if you don't know his work, this is a perfect place to start & if you're a fan of the moody introspection of the likes of low, elliot smith, mark eitzel or even mark hollis, you should really give this a listen. [caldo verde](#)

tartufi : nests of waves & wire

this san francisco duo, much praised for their awe-inspiring live sets & loop-heavy soundscapes, have taken their sonic vision to the next level. further exploring the boundaries of vocal & instrumental layering, poly-rhythmic deconstruction & song arrangement, their 3rd record is a lush & weighty mix of the band's compositional sensibilities & sonic capabilities, making them sound more like a 10 piece band with a full choir than a 2-piece. they possess a knack for guitar-based compositions that move through shoegaze, math rock, dream-pop & occasionally even instrumental metal. lynne angel's vocals are a real revelation, recalling everyone from liz fraser to kristin hersh - a swooping & powerful voice that often sounds close to madness or some sort of ethereal ecstasy. the band have created an entirely refreshing & wholly vital sound which could appeal to fans of everyone from a silver mt. zion to panda bear. recommended. [southern](#)

neils children : x.enc

'x.enc' is the band's ridiculously long-time coming debut album proper but it's been worth the wait. the record has been honing itself in the isolation of a warehouse in herfordshire. the band returned to their hometown with a pc, microphones, guitars & drums to record the album, which they describe as "the ultimate neils children record". the album fuses their trademark vorticist post-punk ('sometimes it's hard to let go', 'communique') with dark, tribal atmospherics ('an exchange') & all out post-big black noise ('motorcar'). with influences ranging as far as a certain ratio, the whispers, alton ellis & josef k, the album is as dynamic as neils children promised is would be. [structurally sound](#)

clues : clues

this montreal quintet features ex members of the short-lived unicorns. co- founded by alden penner & brendan reed (one time arcade fire drummer), their debut yields one undeniable tune after another. forged from post-punk, no-wave & psych influences, clues compose a rare breed of complex pop anthems that stretch their sound without overreaching. an authentic, unfussy & stirringly epic little sonic world unfolds - idiosyncratic & enigmatic but exuberantly infectious & accessible. the arrangements are typically dense, dark & distorted, with layers of guitars creating a thick fug, although there are moments of clarity too. it's one of those records that rewards patience & persistence - a real slow burner. [constellation](#)

v/a : not given lightly

following morr music's tribute compilations to morrissey & slowdive, this compilation is a tribute to the 1980s indie scene of new zealand. flying nun, xpressway, imd or corpus hermeticum were the names of the labels ; the clean, the chills or tall dwarfs the names of the bands. indie-pop & garage songs with an lo-fi antipodean twist, a direct influence on bands around the world such as pavement, yo la tengo & sonic youth. now the morr music family has made them their own in a fantastic way - their electronica & indie-pop roster have interpreted songs like 'not given lightly' by chris knox or 'pink frost' by the chills in their own way & have produced tracks in the spirit of that early new zealand diy ethos. features tracks by seabear, butcher the bar, populous, tarwater, b.fleischmann, borko, isan & more. [morr music](#)

thomas truax : songs from the films of david lynch

thomas truax is a new yorker currently residing in london, known as both a singer-songwriter & inventor of strange self-made instruments like his legendary 'hornicator' & motorized mechanical drum machines. truax employs these as well as traditional instruments in exceptionally crafted, witty & often touching songs. he has had his music described more than a few times as "the perfect soundtrack for a david lynch film", so it seemed a natural choice to cover the great songs lynch chooses for his films. the resulting set of cover versions presented here perfectly demonstrate that the repeated description of his work was indeed fair, as he takes these tracks & makes them not only his own but at the same time, even more appropriate for david lynch's distinctive soundtracks. [psycho teddy](#)

christopher rees : devil's bridge

the welsh singer, song writer, multi instrumentalist & producer has developed his narrative storytelling even further with his 4th album, his most disarmingly upbeat & immediate record yet. 'devil's bridge' is clearly informed by rees' love of americana, in all its diverse & dynamic glory - from rock'n'roll to bluegrass, gospel, blues, country, spaghetti western, rockabilly & appalachian folk - it's all here. the presence of veteran rockabilly guitarists pete mathison (ray davies) & john lewis (the rimshots) injects a vintage authenticity with a nod to elvis, cash, johnny burnette & gene vincent. the cinematic tremolo guitars favoured by quentin tarantino & david lynch provide some enticing atmosphere but as the 12 piece choral sections to some songs show, there remains something quintessentially welsh about his music. [red eye music](#)

alcoholic faith mission : 421 wythe avenue crackling danish melancholy - made in brooklyn. this unpredictable duo present their 2nd album, following their well received debut, 'misery loves company', that earned them comparisons to josé gonzales & iron & wine. 3 years on & they've moved into more electronic territory & have created a sound which would sit very comfortably in the morr music roster. according to the band, this record is sound is much inspired by brooklyn but also by the alternative canadian rock scene & names such as broken social scene, arcade fire, the most serene republic etc. to our ears this sounds like one for fans of mum, the postal service or etterklang. [ponyrec](#)

post war years : the greats & the happenings debut album from hotly tipped 4 piece from leamington spa, who blend indie & electronica in such a way that they sound like a less aggressive, poppier foals. this is an outfit who count among their influences the likes of clor, television, talking heads & tom vek & all of these can be heard throughout this infectious record. "*with an album that combines fluid purpose with layers of abrasive imagination & favouring solitary intellect over tabloid whimsy, post war years cannot be accused of peddling electro-friendly pop; theirs is far more substantially selective*" – daily music guide, "you could tell from the outset this was a winner" - nme. [wealth recordings](#)

meat puppets : sewn together of all of the bands that made sst records a towering force in the american underground during the mid-'80s, the meat puppets lasted the longest, surviving where other bands fell apart. they may never had the dedicated following of hüsker dü or the minutemen - 2 fellow sst bands who played the same circuit - but they were able to carve out a long career where other hardcore bands could not because they drew from conventional hard rock as well as punk. now, the alt-rock legends return with their 2nd full length in little less than 2 years. for the new album, curt & cris chose a home town studio that offered analog process, to help add purity. with production helmed by curt, spontaneity governed the recording process. an endearing record that should appeal to fans of early giant sand, nirvana & husker du. [megaforce](#)

client : heartland (standard cd/cd & dvd) on their 3rd long player welcome you to the dark side of the city - a place for unfulfilled dreams, forbidden desires, escapist visions, betrayed love, anonymity & sex. addictive hook lines over a minimalist electronic backdrop meet new wave & classic brit pop, spiced up with a hint of glam & a bit of northern soul. overseen by veteran producers youth (the verve, primal scream) & stephen hague (new order), "heartland" is their most instant, energetic & versatile release to date. for fans of ladytron & goldfrapp's electro-glampop adventures. [out of line](#)

madness : the liberty of norton folgate you really wouldn't expect much from this, madness' 1st album of original material since 1999 but by returning to the ideas & sounds that made them great in the first place the band have come back triumphant – not with the bouncy, cartoony 'house of fun' & 'baggy trousers' singles sound but with the low key london life lyrics & mike barson's piano & the sound of their greatest album, the melancholy 'the rise & fall'. "*peter ackroyd writing for the kinks, a mike leigh movie of parklife, madness's masterpiece*" – the word. [lucky 7](#)

andrew thompson : i'm not likely to change proper oddball pop from the american multi instrumentalist. squeezing a mini-orchestra into his front room to record this album, the result is a well put together record with a lo-fi feel hanging over the otherwise grand sounding tracks that give a passing nod to some of pop music's more extravert characters like david bowie, elvis costello & adam ant, mixing in with a definite american edge that at times recalls flaming lips circa 'soft bulletin'. "*mixes squelchy synths, old-school breaks & admirable white-soul crooning with psychedelic flare-ups to magnificent effect*" - time out, "*elvis costello meets elo in a downtown twenty-something apartment*" – artrocker. [traffic entertainment](#)

house of brothers : document 1 this nottingham based 5 piece craft delicate indie-folk with flashes of bright eyes, the national & bon iver & have been described as midlake fronted by fionn regan. their sensitive style has earned them support slots recently with like-minded souls such as noah & the whale, mark lanegan, mumford & sons & okkervil river. "*sparkling indie-folk in style...it is serene, stunningly so, & quite wonderfully arresting*" – dis, "*superb bootsale-pop like elliot smith rubbed down with lavender*" – nme. [helpless](#)

orphans & vandals : i am alive & you are dead these londoners have been creating quite a stir recently being likened to the velvet underground or a young british Beirut. their complex arrangements are tight yet messy & al joshua's spoken-word vocal stylings suggest a frantic, breathless thom yorke. they bring their multi-instrumental talents to the fore - the swirling violin & harmonica of 'argyle square,' the stripped-down pizzicato/accordion accompaniment on 'liquor on sunday' & musical saw on 'incognito'. it is easy to see why they have caught the attention of the press & it looks like they're set for much bigger things. "*as a rock record, it is simply tremendous. as a debut, it so exceeds expectations the mind reels. anger, joy, devastation & black humour - really, it's all here...55 minutes of the best music you will hear all year*" 9/10 - popmatters. [self released](#)

cats on fire : our temperance movement jangling indie-pop tussling with rip-roaring rock'n'roll & ornate rem-esque melodies squaring up to exuberant dancefloor smashes. imagine growing up in finland anything other than a hard rock fan. from the glammed up rock of hanoi rocks to the globe-conquering metal of him & the rasmus, finland's contribution to music has tended to be loud, brash & rocking. it's safe to say that cats on fire singer mattias bjorkas isn't a heavy metal fan. kicking off with the infectious, hand-clapping, energy rush of the single 'tears in your cup', the album showcases mattias' singular style & worldview – he's sardonic, poetic, funny, political, eccentric - a flamboyant misfit. "*cats on fire hit a high mark few other earnest young men can get near*" - q. [how does it feel to be loved](#)

lacrosse : bandages for the heart lacrosse's debut has had critics use words like "euphoric", "perky" & "sunshine pop". on this, their follow-up, the 6-piece swedish pop combo teamed up with acclaimed producer jari haapalainen (the concretes, ed harcourt etc.) to create an opus with no less euphoria but a lot more edge. 'bandages for the heart' shows a heavier & darker side of lacrosse with traces of disco, punk, flamenco & krautrock running throughout. it'll have you bouncing on the brightest lit dance-floor & crying in the darkest corner, all in the span of 37 minutes. "5 boys & one girl making sparkingly wonderful pop music from a candle-lit basement in stockholm...the sort of pop music that makes you be glad to be alive" - the word. [tapete](#)

the loves : three the 60s obsessives' 3rd & finest album features 11 tracks of bubblegum pop, nuggets garage & mini-rock operas about synaesthesia, coca-cola & girls. 'three' sees the group embrace their bubblegum pop roots with more of the multi-coloured 60's influenced pop music. the main influences this time are the who, boyce & hart, the flaming lips & primal scream. it was recorded over 18 months at 3 locations - east london, brooklyn & cardiff & features guest performers such as darren hayman & the voluntary butler scheme. [fortuna pop](#)

los albertos : dish it up since their formation in late 2002, brighton's los albertos have been creating a frenzy upon the dance floors & grassy fields of europe with their inimitable foot-stompin', brass-blarin' & rip snortin' high energy blend of ska, punk, funk, dub & original beats. drawing upon a peculiarly twisted english humour (where the comic strip meets league of gentlemen), this 6-piece throw in some dynamite horn, guitar & drum action. this is the 3rd album from the fun lovin' skaminals, featuring some of their best tunes including 'carry on', 'leslie' & 'saint'. it's dance music, jim, but not as we know it... [self released](#)

v/a : causes volume 2 the 2nd album in waxploitation's ongoing benefit series for darfur. 100% of the profits from the release go to doctors without borders / médecins sans frontières, human rights watch & oxfam america. the album includes rare & exclusive songs from some of the most compelling artists in the indie & alternative music worlds including black moth super rainbow, the decemberists, devendra banhart, diplo, federico aubele, gnarls barkley, lcd soundsystem, my morning jacket, matthew dear, mum, neon neon, rjd2 & sharon jones & the dap-kings, as well as a contribution from adult swim's tim & eric. [waxploitation](#)

adam franklin : spent bullets adam franklin was the singer, guitarist & main songwriter for the london-based shoegazers swervedriver - contemporaries of & label mates with my bloody valentine & ride but with a more adrenalized rock 'n' roll sound, showing flashes of husker du & sonic youth. now he returns with his 2nd solo album. the power & melody that has always coursed through the veins of his electric songs is in full effect on tunes such as 'surge', 'teardrops keep fallin' out my head' & 'autumn leaf' but then in the likes of 'big sur', 'champs' or 'end credits', there are all sorts of other unexpected sonic fingerprints - smudged evocations of scott walker soundtracking a french spy movie or the temptations refracted through side three of electric ladyland perhaps? in short, some of the most sonically beautiful songs of franklin's career. [second motion](#)

spiral joy band : little sparrow (limited) the 3rd vhf release for this southwestern virginia ensemble that is derived from the extended pelt / jack rose / black twigs family. the 4 tracks here are an evolution from the trance-like gong & percussion sounds of recent joy band releases, with the quartet putting more of an emphasis on heavily bowed string sounds. mike gangloff's fiddle, which plays it relatively straight in the black twigs (& occasionally pelt), cuts loose here with some gnarly string scratching, giving the music a searing, visceral edge. the final track finds the band literally standing in the atlantic ocean, with their gongs & tibetan bowls shimmering out a gentle lullaby. no overdubs, no amplification, no effects. lengthy microtonal explorations in the tradition of taj mahal travellers, henry flynt, theatre of eternal music etc. [vhf](#)

jd souther : if the world was you jd souther famously played a key role in the formation of the eagles & co-wrote their hits 'heartache tonight', 'victim of love' & 'new kid in town'. souther has also released 3 critically acclaimed solo albums between 1972 & 1979 but in 1985, after countless hit records, grammy nominations, american music awards & gold & platinum albums, he decided to walk away from his solo career. now at the end of his self-imposed exile from record making, souther has emerged with his 1st new solo album in 25 years! the basic structures are typical souther, with melancholy chord changes & melodies that tug & ache, while the flights of instrumental fancy are more adventurous & elongated than what would typically be heard on an album by a master of songcraft. [rhino](#)

edward rogers : you haven't been where i've been new yorker edward rogers was born in england & was raised on the music of the great pop bands of the 60's & 70's britpop/rock. he's very active on the downtown new york music scene, & this is the follow-up to his highly-acclaimed debut 'sunday fables'. 2 stellar guitarists - roger mcguinn (the byrds) & marty willson-piper (the church) - join an impressive line-up of musicians. mcguinn contributes his signature electric 12-string sound to a couple of tracks & willson-piper, turned up to 12, brings a raging, soaring, manic guitar to 'graveyard voices'. also guesting is dennis diken (the smithereens) & pete kennedy (the kennedys). the 1st half of this cd sounds like the great long lost elo album, the rest of it sounds like the great long lost album by the move. [zip](#)

blow-up : the kerbstones turn to moss compilation from brighton's original indie-guitar heroes blow-up. features long deleted tracks from across their career, including the hard-to-find creation records singles & classic cuts from their time on cherry red. in addition, there's 3 previously unheard songs which are exclusive to this release, plus a 20 page booklet with exclusive liner notes from blow-up singer & main man nick roughley. [cherry red](#)

v/a : brand neu! this compilation exemplifies to today's kids/music fans what a key influence neu! aka michael rother & klaus dinger continue to be to so many bands across so many scenes. along with all the obvious choices—lcd soundsystem, primal scream, fujiya & miyagi - are some surprises (oasis anybody?), new faces & exclusive tracks by la dusseldorf (one of the last pieces of music late drummer klaus dinger was involved in before his death in march 2008), school of seven bells & michael rother. the liner notes contain some succinct, reverential & sometimes rambling (here's looking at you james murphy!) tributes to neu! from some of the contributors. [feraltone](#)

the wonder stuff : eight-legged groove machine (20th anniversary edition) this 20th anniversary edition of their 1988 debut has been completely re-recorded to give it a sharper, bolder & more contemporary edge. this edition features extra tracks & b-sides from around the original release, all re-recorded to give a much fuller sound. this recording was made with the original producer pat collier & whilst staying true to the original, there have been a number of tweaks made to bring the album in to the 21st century. "like the buzzcocks with the irony meter turned to 11, or a much less sweet-natured version of the so-called "blonde pop" bands of the time (primitives, darling buds, etc.), the wonder stuff's debut album is a crisply recorded batch of buzzy little two-minute guitar pop songs" 4/5 - [amg](#). [irl](#)

saint etienne: continental (deluxe edition) continental was a japanese only compilation of saint etienne's non-album singles, cover versions & new material that was recorded in 1996-97 inbetween working on other projects. the album, which features 'he's on the phone', their biggest ever hit single, now receives it's first ever release outside of japan & has been remastered & expanded to 2 discs, including 4 previously unreleased tracks. [umc](#)

saint etienne: fox base alpha (deluxe edition) saint etienne's debut album was released in 1991 & was nominated for the inaugural mercury music prize. although sarah cracknell was not fully integrated into the band at this point & did not sing on all the tracks, it is now cited as one of the classic albums of the era & rightly so. the album is home to the timeless 'only love can break your heart' & 'nothing can stop us', 2 tracks which make this worth owning alone. now remastered with a 2nd disc featuring b-sides, mixes & 5 previously unreleased tracks, it's time to rediscover this little gem. come on aunty, we'll miss the bus.....[umc](#)

tom tom club: tom tom club (deluxe edition) the first of island's albums to be given the island50 deluxe make over is tom tom club's stunning debut album from 1981. it has now been digitally remastered & expanded with 5 bonus remixes, including the top 10 hit 'wordy rappinghood'. the 2nd disc contains, for the first time on cd, the band's 2nd album 'close to the bone' which features the club hit, 'the man with the 4-way hips' & has also been expanded with 4 bonus remixes. tom tom club began life as a side project for talking heads members chris frantz & tina weymouth, who adopted a light, tropical dance style in contrast to the art-school intellectualism of talking heads. this is collection of funky, sprightly little tunes recorded in barbados that have stood the test of time surprisingly well. [universal](#)

anni hogan : kickabye (2cd)from her early days as a legendary batcave dj, through her work with marc almond (marc & the mambas, willing sinners, la magia), anni hogan is one of the true geniuses of the alternative scene. a composer, songwriter, arranger, producer, promoter & dj, she helped to shape the sound of the 80s. in a musical career spanning 3 decades she has worked with many successful artists in a variety of capacities including nick cave, soft cell, lydia lunch, einsturzende neubaten & many, many more. this is the 1st time her debut ep 'kickabye' – interpretations of poet jessamy calkin - has been available on cd & it has been digitally remastered & expanded to include 16 extra tracks. it features collaborations with nick cave, barry adamson, siouxsie, yello & of course, marc almond. [cold spring](#)

rodriguez : coming from reality classic lost 70's folk-rock/psychedelia from the hispanic, funky dylan-a-like. this is the 1st official release of the follow up to sixto diaz rodriguez's classic 'cold fact' which figured highly in many of 2008's 'reissue of the year' charts including uncut & mojo. recorded in 1970 with legendary producer steve rowland (pretty things, the cure), this album has now been enhanced with a deluxe booklet & 3 bonus tracks recorded circa '72 with mike theodore & dennis coffey. [light in the attic](#)

girls at our best : pleasure girls at our best were one of the finest, most life-affirming of a new breed of independent bands who cropped up at the turn of the 80s. long-standing fan john peel once referred to them as one of the few groups that made the period bearable. formed in leeds from the ashes of legendary original punk band sos, the group were fronted by distinctive female vocalist jude 'jo' evans, forming a songwriting team with guitarist james alan & bass player gerard swift after they met at art college & featuring a pre-fame thomas dolby here & there on keyboards. "an underrated delight" 4/5 - [amg](#). [cherry red](#)

chairlift : does you inspire you (reissue) the former album of the week recipients have been endorsed by yeasayer & mgmt. these hipsters are a nutty cut-&-paste trio who make warped-but-catchy electropop. this album's all over the place in terms of sound & influences which makes it really difficult to describe. fronted by caroline polachek, whose soulful vocals bring to mind both suzanne veга & chan marshall, essentially they merge their colorado roots with their new urban surroundings (they have now relocated to brooklyn), developing a hypnotic, yet tongue-in-cheek style of synth-pop, artfully fusing whimsical 80s electro-pop (japan, yazoo) with folk & psychedelia, as well as avant electronica (tortoise, tarwater). like we said, impossible to pin down! what you really need to know is that like the output of their buddies, they have delivered a work that grows with every listen & that delivers something new to your ears everytime. [columbia](#)

sigur rós : von (reissue) 'von' (which translates as hope) was the debut album from iceland's most widely acclaimed band. though darker & more fractured than the string-laden nooks of the follow-up, the now classic 'ágætis byrjun', it's just as sprawling & outright bombastic. it's remarkable that such a young band would be this experimental at this stage in their lifespan, veering from gavin bryars-style aquatic minimalism to my bloody valentine-style dream pop, varying states of isolationist ambience run throughout, whether evoking unrest or tranquil rest. on overlooked but essential record. [smekkleysa](#)

procol harum : procol harum reissue of the highly influential debut album by procol harum from 1967. known of course for their defining hit 'a whiter shade of pale' (which appears here), this album also helped pave the way for aspiring british rock bands of the time, serving up an engaging meld of psychedelic rock, blues, & classical influences, filled with phantasmagorical lyrics, bold (but not flashy) organ by matthew fisher & robin trower's most tasteful & restrained guitar. 'conquistador', 'kaleidoscope', 'a christmas camel' & the bach-influenced 'repent walpurgis' are superb & 'good captain clack' is great, almost kinks-like fun. "*it holds up better than most psychedelic or progressive rock*" – [amg](#). [salvo](#)

turtles : save the turtles - the turtles greatest hits a newly formulated package from one of america's most beloved pop bands of the 60s. newly remastered from the original tapes, this collection features 20 of the turtles' classics, including 'happy together', 'elenore', 'she'd rather be with me', 'you baby' & 'it aint me babe'. also included, for the 1st time, is the turtle's musical contribution to a 1967 camaro commercial. "*with howard kaylan & mark volman, the turtles possessed 2 strong lead singers – of a visual mould riotously at odds with rock star stereotypes – & their combination of careful song selection & self-mocking humour made them successful & endearing*" - [rolling stone](#). [manifesto](#)

moebius & plank : rastakraut pasta this was the 1st record from the duo of dieter moebius & conny plank, originally released on sky records in 1980. moebius & plank had worked together before on numerous records, with moebius playing & plank producing on works from cluster & harmonia. the album combines the spirit of innovation that runs through both krautrock & dub production, making for a unique match-up of strange skanking drum machines, choppy vocoders & sublime kosmische synth play. it still sounds like nothing else in the known universe. [water](#)

dance/electronica

lindstrom & prins thomas : lindstrom & prins thomas ii kings of trendy scando-disco fare hans-peter lindstrom & prins thomas return with the follow up to their widely acclaimed eponymous debut. both chaps have been off doing their own thing for a while, with thomas completing countless remixes & seeing his full pupp stable go from strength to strength whilst lindstrom went on to release his solo cosmic disco opus 'where i go you go too' but now they return with another collaborative work that has a much looser, organic feel than the 1st record. the original intent stands, however, as they merge their italo, krautrock & disco influences into a lush singular whole, imbuing them with their characteristically warm production sheen. if anything though, this is a lot more cosmic than previous work, heading into vintage psychedelic territories at times & finds lindstrom & thomas at the top of their game. [eskimo](#)

flevans : 27 devils brighton's beat ambassador fleavans returns to his original home, tru thoughts, for this his 3rd album. whilst previous releases have been largely sample-based, covering dancefloor breaks & downtempo fare, this new record sees fleavans ditch the samples & go 100% live. a brave move perhaps but as a very proficient bass player himself, he has no troubles laying down some seriously tasty bass lines, along with rolling drums, some funk guitar & a few vocal collaborations along the way from shona foster & sarah scott. this sounds like a very complete & accomplished album that manages to pull out dancefloor bangers & laidback soulful songs with ease & should see fleavans' rep continue to grow. fans of all things tru thoughts, nightmares on wax & ninja tune should check this quick smart. [tru thoughts](#)

v/a : milky disco 2 – let's go freakout! (2cd) the fabulous lo label serve another installment of their excellent milky disco series, rounding up a sterling collection of balearic beats, textures, melodies & vibrations whose influences range from detroit techno to german experimentalism, 80's west coast vibes, italo disco, soul, industrial, ambient & avant garde to create what could loosely be called 'exploratory space dance music'. thus nestled among the many nuggets here you'll find the neo prog deep bush kalimba vibes of 'pissed & passed out' by ghost note, the arthur russell-ish narco-disco of nite jewel's 'what did he say', canyon's deep space blues 'big city lights' & gatto fritto's kraut meets disco epic 'hungry ghosts'. great alternative dance fodder! "*the quintessential cosmic compilation*" – [vice](#). [lo](#)

moderat : moderat (cd/dvd) moderat was born when apparat's sascha ring hooked up with modeselektor's gernot bronsert & sebastian szary for an ep on bpitch. so strenuous was production of this ep the trio felt moved to title it auf kosten der gesundheit ('at the cost of health') & soon went separate ways after its release. now, 7 years & a chance meeting at a berlin swimming pool later, they've hooked up again this time delivering a full album. the end product must surely represent some of the most ambitious & far-reaching recordings these musicians have ever been involved in. certainly, there's traces of apparat's lush epic take on electronica, as well as the more typically modeselektor-esque tracks like the dancehall-influenced 'slow match' (featuring paul st. hilaire) but overall this is a great electronic album that has a real analogue warmth & depth to it which has clearly been laboured over. "*long stretches of moderat find the three producers locked into a healthy creative symbiosis that accentuates the best parts of their individual styles*" – [pitchfork](#). [bpitchcontrol](#)

nathan fake : hard islands (cd & lp) before we go on, let's just clear up a couple of matters surrounding this new release from nathan fake – firstly, it ain't an album but an ep comprising 6 tracks spread over half an hour or so, secondly those hankering after more widescreen fluffy electronica of the 'drowning in a sea of love' variety had better get out the armchair & don their finest dancing clogs, as this is mr fake's take on the european techno blueprint. certainly the melodies are there, however this is underpinned by a tough, tech sound that shows an acute awareness of what works on the dancefloor. a new direction then, but certainly one that fake seems very proficient at executing, & will no doubt sound particularly slamming on the club systems it was designed for. fans of clark, aphex twin or the more recent techno explorations of four tet will certainly find much to love here. *"brilliant second album, which welds his drifting soundscapes to fractious, rapturous techno"* 4/5 - the guardian. [border community](#)

savath & savalas : la llama another week, another new album from scott herren (prefuse 73), surely this man never sleeps? under the savath & savalas moniker, along with friends eva puyuleo muns & new recruit roberto carlos lange, they make music inspired by a shared love of south american psychedelic music, catalan folk & the early 70's independent music scene that flourished in brazil. the prefuse influence is ever present, as snippets of sound whirr & click - however it's all a lot softer & more subtle here than on his other work, laying more emphasis on the floating vocals of muns, whose spanish words are pasted over the varese-like soundscapes of una cura, like revolutionary graffiti on a brutalist tower block, a captivating blue-print of old versus new is drawn up, the overall experience feeling like musical time travel. *"impossible to pigeonhole... casual brilliance"* - the wire. [stones throw](#)

krazy baldhead : the b-suite krazy baldhead, a 30-something chap from the south of france who is presumably a bit mental & thin on top, makes the kind of weird, warped electro music one would expect from a man of this name. his debut is an ordered collection of 16 pieces separated into 4 movements that with some help from brooklyn rapper tes, japan's mademoiselle yulia, big-o, outlines & miami francophile beat assailant, takes the listener on a largely instrumental era defining journey that blurs the lines of distinction between sega-electro, jazz & hip-hop. to comprehensively unpick the individual threads & themes of each movement would demystify the mechanics of mr. baldhead's epic, unrelenting & intricate 50-minute marathon & in any case prove impossible. bizarre but playful fun electro....aren't those frenchmen zany? [ed banger](#)

federico aubele : amatoria argentinean singer/songwriter federico aubele returns with another very personal record, inspired by the classic & passionate sounds of bolero & argentinian tango, infusing his distinctive spanish guitar sound with sultry vocals & subtle electronic beats to create a unique collage of intimate love songs. a wide variety of influences assert themselves here, ranging from downtempo to reggae, boleros, flamenco, tango & salsa. whilst 'amatoria' doesn't beat listeners over the head with aubele's emotions, for those who can appreciate subtlety & understatement, this excellent album never fails to demonstrate that the buenos aires native is an artist of major depth & substance. for fans of thievery corporation, gotan project & boozoo bajou. [18th st lounge](#)

luke hess : light in the dark(cd / 2lp) one of the frontmost exponents of the nu-dub techno wave of producers, luke hess has built up a solid catalogue for the likes of omar-s' fxhe, kontra-musik & echocord, who deliver this debut album. alongside likeminded dub aesthetes like marko furstenburg, quantec or sven weisemann, luke has taken the template of mid-late 90's berlin techno & merged it with his native detroit sound for a purely refined & eternally groovesome sound, benefiting from well tailored software enhancements that just weren't available the first time round, allowing him to manipulate the sound to a further extent than his predecessors. his exploration of deep detroit dance music through field recordings, live percussion, analog experimentation & dark cavernous melodies make this an essential listen for those who like the deeper end of the techno spectrum. [echochord](#)

optimo : optimo presents in order to edit brand new series from seminal belgian electronic music label r&s records, taking the very popular 'in order to dance' concept but with the compiler re-editing every track & creating a unique mix - cult hero & music aficionado jd twitch from optimo fame is the first dj/producer to get the order. for twitch, r&s is where it all started; he explains *"there was a period from '89 to '92 that i would get my weekly r&s fix from my local import store & had so much confidence in the greatness of the label that i would buy without listening. those 12" singles from belgium were constantly pushing the envelope & literally reinventing the language of techno & rave music week by week."* with tracks from the likes of joey beltram, jam & spoon, cj bolland, aphex twin & jaydee you really can't argue with that. [r&s records](#)

v/a : all night long (2cd) tasty compilation from will saul's aus imprint. the label has always aimed to be a diverse affair, simply putting out various strains of deep dance music with its roots in house that can be played from dusk till dawn, all night long. certainly this outlook is reflected well here, with disc 1 offering up new & exclusive tracks from lee jones, my my, roland appel, appleblim & marty, whilst disc 2 is a retrospective mix of the label so far put together by saul. check this if you like your house deep & just a little eccentric. [aus](#)

shitmat : one foot in the rave another shitmat album & well, you know what to expect! this one takes things back to the old skool, when pirate radio & bad (meaning bad) mc's were all the rage. a nostalgic album full of '92-'94 jungle breaks & amen killers, he's gone to great effort in the album to keep the original authentic jungle sound using an akai s950 sampler (the hardcore junglist's weapon of choice) & sampling cassettes from old pirate radio shows. this amen-heavy full length is reminiscent of dj seduction, foul play & early remarc with a tip of the hat from shitmat towards the oldskool masters of the break. [planet mu](#)

guido möbius : gebirge the 3rd album from berlin producer guido mobius takes a turn towards the surreal, starting with 'niemens', which comes across like a tongue-in-cheek collaboration between jaap blonk & prince, full of nonsense tone-poetry & horribly discordant funk. next, some 4-to-the-floor structuring supplies a more orderly sensibility to 'i am williams kamera', while 'dig a mammoth' travels further down a wormhole to nowhere with a clash of string instruments & bizarre electronic sound treatments. this bizarre rhythmic scatology tightens up once again for 'sssplitter', drawing a choppy, percussive line of horns into play whilst vocals spew semi-beatboxed word-debris all over the track. well weird, like a male camille on some seriously odd drugs but great fun too. "all very peculiar, but oddly quite addictive" – boomkat. [karaoke kalk](#)

v/a : konrad black - watergate 03 3rd part of the innovative compilation series by famous berlin club watergate. watergate is the oldest & most recognizable of clubs in the hype berlin mitte area, known for its state of the art design & riverside location, it was voted by resident advisor as the worlds 3rd most important venue. for this instalment wagon repair's konrad black takes the reigns. if you've ever checked his tracks you'll know that konrad is a sinister fella, branded with a style of gothic tinted techno & house music with a powerfully sensual allure, which certainly comes across in this mix as tracks from alex cortex, rauidive, loco dice, ben klock, mathew jonson & louderbach take things into dark techno terrain. [watergate](#)

faze action : stratus energy a return of uk retro-disco-housers faze action! going back a fair few years, faze action released the now bonafide classic 'in the trees' & certainly those who fondly remember that track will be pleased to hear this album continues its cruise around the disco cosmos. there's plenty of slo mo disco, balearic-tinged grooves & even a touch of psych, with plenty of moog cameos, percussion & strings all giving this a very authentic disco flavour & what with the current revival, seems like an immaculately timed release. [faze action records](#)

biosphere : wireless - live at the arnolfini, bristol the very first live album by that giant of ambient music geir jenssen, wireless was recorded in bristol's arnolfini during the touch 25 live event of 2007. jenssen's set takes the form of a single hour-long continuous stream, indexed into 11 tracks, incorporating fresh material alongside retakes on a variety of sounds that'll already carry some familiarity with followers of biosphere studio albums. although culled from very different eras in electronic music, you never get the sense that lining up recent works next to 90's emissions presents any sort of technological anachronism & jenssen does a great job of imposing a new slant on his catalogue by weaving these pieces into a single, unfolding narrative. "you'd be extremely hard-pressed to find a better sounding live document anywhere. a massive recommendation" – boomkat. [touch](#)

meanderthals : desire lines more balearic scando-vibes present & correct on this album from meanderthals, a group comprising london's dub disco kings the idjut boys & oslo based musician rune lindbaek. musically this is a warm & hazy blend of dub, folk, kraut, psychedelia & 70s west-coast combined to invent an organic, slanted & proggy feel. recorded live, the album features contributions from some good friends who lend drums, percussion, bass & keys to the proceedings. a great album that's quite contented basking in its slacker, stoned glory & will no doubt appeal to fans of lindstrom & thomas, black devil disco club & studio. "a purely instrumental affair, 'desire lines' feels roomy & unfussy despite the genre mashing, often laying in the cut of a ponderous & swollen bassline" – pitchfork. [smalltown supersound](#)

v/a : this is what the universe sounds like a retrospective comp from the universal vibes label. with it's freestyle music policy, taking in broken beats, dubstep, deep house, techno, hip hop, funk, soul, disco & all points between, label founder paddy freeform describes the sound as future soul music for the dance floor. showcasing artists such as surra, andy ash, poussez, jafar & bobby strobe, the onas, strange worlds, jaffasurfa & young david, this is eclectic dancefloor fair that fans of giles peterson, jazzanova & the tru thoughts stable would do well to check out. [universal vibes](#)

yppah : they know what ghost know an unusual artist for a label like ninja tune, but a very welcome addition nonetheless. this is yppah's 2nd album for the label, a heady mix of beat driven shoegaze & psych rock-flecked styles informed by such disparate influences as my bloody valentine, caribou & spacemen 3 that manages to neatly harmonise these into a gloriously ecstatic blend of fx laden guitars & driving breakbeats. apparently joe corrales jr, the man behind the moniker, has a background in both rock bands & as a hip hop dj & certainly these influences do shine through here. good to see the ninja folk are still prepared to take a risk now & again & release little gems such as this. "imagine daedalus jamming with kevin shields & you've gone too far, take a couple of steps back & you've got yppah" – boomkat, "a sun-blistered, slow-burning soundtrack for the summer" – the skinny. [ninja tune](#)

hip hop

aceyalone : aceyalone & the lonely ones now clocking in at a total of 9 solo albums & as a follow-up to his 2007 album 'lightning strikes,' aceyalone drops a 2nd album with producer bionik. 'aceyalone & the lonely ones' is a tribute to motown, doo-wop, blues & funk sub-genres that have long inspired the mc in his musical life, even as it pertains to hip hop. certainly the themes & big band sound here work well with aceyalone's flow. even if it does all whiff a little of that mark ronson fellow. ultimately though, this is positive, feel good hip hop that can't help but plant a big smile across the face. [modular](#)

mr lif : i heard it today righteous anger & lyrical venom abounds as mr lif puts the post-bush world into grim perspective. boldly holding a mirror to the face of society, lif has blended veteran producers such as edan & j-zone with up & coming producers willie evans jr., batsauce, therapy & headnodic to create an album that speaks brazenly about the current political issues & agendas americans & the global community are facing. however lif takes these negatives & turns them on their head, using them in search of a healthier way of life & a way to achieve freedom & peace of mind through the power of the imagination. lif has always excelled at forward thinking, intelligent hip hop & this album is no exception. fans of edan, aesop rock & cannibal ox should grab this! "a masterly work" 4/5 - *the guardian*. [traffic entertainment](#)

eminem : relapse detroit-born marshall mathers - one of the most iconic & influential rappers of all time - makes a long-awaited return with 'relapse', the follow up to 2004's 'encore'. produced by himself & dr.dre, the album often harks back to some of his 1990s material, blending comedy with remarkable lyrical flow. meanwhile, fans also are treated to the reflective, emotional content that has given his music more depth over the years. "a more painful, honest & vital record than anyone could have expected at this point in the mc's career" 4/5 - *rolling stone*. [polydor](#)

dj premier : rare play volume ii dj premier is one of the best known & respected true hip hop producers & djs & this is his 2nd official mix cd. a proper hip hop mix cd, this is the follow up to the sellout 'rare play vol 1'. dj premier has produced so many classic tracks he must have one of the deepest catalogues in hip hop. with this in mind dj premier (or premo as he is known) has selected another 18 of his favourite but more underground, lesser-known works for the 2nd volume of his new mix series. the tracks on here are ruff, rugged & raw & are mixed live. [fat beats](#)

p.o.s : never better former punk rocker p.o.s. returns with a follow up to 2006's critically acclaimed 'audition'. written mostly in a moving car, p.o.s raps at full clip to ride rolling drums & revving distortion. there's an urgency that he keeps in careful check & then unleashes for spring-loaded verses that represent his best work. feedback & relentless drum rolls are only occasionally tempered by sung choruses & clean, chiming guitar lines. it's refreshing to know that while lil' wayne's creative but messy flow & kanye west's compositional but mostly thoughtless prowess boost so many unimaginative artists onto the summit of the top 40, there are still musicians as inventive & moving as p.o.s. [rhymesayers](#)

trimbal : soulfood vol. 4 (2cd) the 4th & final volume in ex-roll deep artist trim's (aka trimbal aka trimmothy aka taliban trim) distinctive & unique 'soulfood' series of mixtape cd albums. lovers of the more indie/leftfield orientated end of hip hop will appreciate trim's off-key flow & observational, often highly personal lyrical style - you come to feel you are walking around inside trims head as you sink into the disengaged structures of these albums & melt into his world. volume 4 ('da bucket meal') features disc 1 (main course) with vocals & production by ballistiQ beats, disc 2 (dessert) being all instrumentals (prod. by t spark & jerzy). one of the true renegades of the grime scene. [monkey features](#)

prodigy : ultimate p (2cd) a double album round up of some of the finest tracks from mobb deep member prodigy's long & successful career in the rap game. includes his solo work, as well as mobb deep tracks & collaborations with m.o.p., 50 cent & more. essential east coast hardcore rap flavours! [modulor](#)

soul/funk

ray camacho & the teardrops : the best of - chicano salsa, funk, cumbia & soul

1968 to 1971 compiled by dj pete isaac from the legendary club night jelly jazz, after pete discovered & fell under the spell of ray's music on original vinyl during a trip to new york in the late 90s. trumpeter ray camacho formed his band in 1960 & like many jobbing chicano musicians, spent nearly a decade paying his dues by playing thousands of concerts before finding legitimate success as a recording artist & recording well over 30 albums for a variety of labels including discos falcon, cbs & california records. the music itself is diverse as it is timeless, ranging from straight ahead salsa, latin rock, traditional cumbia, soul & latin funk but all featuring the unstoppable dance floor force that has made ray's sounds indispensable. [freestyle records](#)

leela james : let's do it again the hotly-anticipated 2nd album from one of the most acclaimed new soul singers to emerge during the past 5 years. recorded in classic style, leela delivers high-energy funk/soul topped by incendiary vocals. 'let's do it again' achieves leela's ambition to record a classic soul album, recording live in the studio with her own band in the manner of the great stax & motown recordings. highlights include her interesting take on james brown's 'it's a man's man's man's world', a funky version of the rolling stones' 'miss you' & a soulful version of womack & womack's dance hit 'baby i'm scared of you'. [shanachie](#)

laura izibor : let the truth be told this piano playing 21 year old was born & raised in dublin but you wouldn't know it. drawing stylistic comparisons to seminal soul singers such as candi staton, roberta flack & aretha franklin, 'let the truth be told' anchors itself firmly in classic r'n'b, combining a reverence for the traditions of vintage soul with a thoroughly refreshing twist of modern sensibility, not unlike alicia keys. written & co-produced by laura herself, 'let the truth be told' is a fitting display of a formidable talent at work. from the breezy sunshine pop of 'shine' to the dreamy love lament 'if tonight is my last' & the gospel-infused 'mmm', it's laura's ear for melody & feel for a groove that sparkles. [atlantic](#)

blues

bob log iii : my shit is perfect bob log iii is a one man band slide guitar party, a perverse product of the arizona desert. a whirlwind of dextrous limbs & digits, this super star sonic showman has to be seen to be believed – we have & we are still not sure we believe what we have seen! clad in his cannonball man, extra tight jumpsuit & signature motorcycle helmet with telephone/microphone attached, he unfailingly sweats up a river while kicking on a kick drum, stomping his homemade foot cymbal, playing slide on an old archtop guitar & warning the crowd to quit eyeballing his 'ass'. yet beyond these mesmerizing visuals & quips, lies the true reason for his cult status & superhero adoration. it is quite simply the guitar playing - finger picked lightning, sliding up & down, stopping & starting again when it feels like it. he is a whirlwind of gonzo blues & clang boom steam like tom waits on steroids or seasick steve on acid! [birdman](#)

v/a : captain beefheart's jukebox if there's one contemporary composer whose influence is almost impossible to ascertain, it's the artist once known as don van vliet – more familiarly, captain beefheart. the music he released between his 1967 debut 'safe a milk' & his last album, recorded almost 30 years ago, 'ice cream for crow', was so original & unique that any attempt to catalogue those who inspired its organic creation, is a task few would relish. however, there are 2 central themes that do run through beefheart's repertoire : these being blues & free form jazz. this compilation brings together the records it is known he was listening to prior to making his own music (often in the company of school chum frank zappa) & throughout his musical career. these records have been responsible, in their own way, for establishing a recording style whereby experimentation is de rigeur & following what came before is forbidden. [chrome dreams](#)

country

carrie rodriguez : she ain't me this album is something of a departure for violinist-turned-fiddler rodriguez. her follow up to debut 'seven angels' finds her teaming up with the jayhawks' gary louris & mary gauthier amongst others, to tackle an album of americana rock/pop that is helmed by legendary producer malcolm burn (emmylou harris, patti smith, daniel lanois). 'she ain't me' is an expectation-confounding statement & sees rodriguez experimenting with a new sound & outlook to her music. her time spent touring with lucinda williams has certainly rubbed off & in fact williams appears on the album. her heart may still be country but her head has new territories to roam. [continental song city](#)

steve earle : townes (cd / 2cd) this album is steve's tribute to his friend & mentor, the late singer-songwriter, townes van zandt. in steve's own words - "townes van zandt is the best songwriter in the whole world & i'll stand on bob dylan's coffee table in my cowboy boots & say that." & we can't really argue with that! earle clearly revere's his departed friend & these interpretations of his favourite van zandt songs are restrained & thoughtful. respect has been paid to the originals but earle hasn't avoided putting much of himself into the performances & his reliable backing band – including tom morello, his wife allison moorer & son justin townes earle, add plenty too. one of his finest records to date. when speaking about townes, earle stated, "*this may be one of the best records i've ever made. that hurts a singer-songwriter's feelings. then again, it's some consolation that i cherry picked through the career of one of the best songwriters that ever lived.*" recommended. [new west](#)

world

vieux farka toure: fondo (the road) vieux's 2nd album sees him step out of his father, ali farka toure's considerable shadow. ali proved that the soul of the blues could be found in west africa. vieux, however, is turning heads with a more radical idea: that those western saharan roots can be heard in everything from the jam band scene to jamaican dub. his formidable guitar skills are put to work on a range of different styles - from gorgeously haunting african blues to scorching rockers to african reggae. his father may have not wanted this life for him but vieux proves that a 2nd generation of family musicians was inevitable. recommended. [six degrees](#)

kronos quartet : floodplain kronos quartet draws together work from the middle east, africa, south asia & eastern europe - in particular from those nations whose external conflicts & internal divisions have often overshadowed their rich musical legacies. with these 12 specially commissioned tracks, kronos quartet explore centuries-old traditions while also presenting adventurous new music by young composers who sample & reinterpret aspects of their indigenous cultures. some of these pieces have been adapted from the religious, folk, classical & popular music of egypt, lebanon, azerbaijan & iraq, among other places. others were written for kronos quartet by artists such as the palestinian electronic/hip hop collective ramallah underground & the serbian composer aleksandra vrebalo. "*an impressive foray into alien idioms*" – [telegraph](#), [nonesuch](#)

mamer : eagle one of 10 children, mamer learnt the songs & instruments of the grasslands from his father & grandfather. one of china's most innovative & influential artists, he draws inspiration from the songs & poetry of the grasslands where he grew up. his 5-piece band 'iz' was credited with single-handedly kick-starting china's alt-country scene. eagle is his debut solo album & finds mamer in an introspective mood, it features a repertoire of grassland songs, normally sung solo & accompanied by the simple 2-stringed dombra, adapted & updated for the 21st century. lyrical, troubadour folk, infused with an alt-country sensibility. [world records](#)

omar souleyman : dabke 2020 - folk & pop/sounds of syria this is the 2nd volume of northeast syrian *dabke* music from legendary vocalist omar souleyman & his group. culled from dozens of cassettes recorded in syria from 1999-2008, the music here is an extension of omar's 'highway to hassake: folk & pop sounds of syria' release. their trademark serpentine synthesizers, electrified bouzok (traditional stringed instrument) & driving rhythms, forge a severe form of "new wave dabke" with a live energy & integrity that captures the essence of the syrian northeast. [sublime frequencies](#)

peter walker : spanish guitar the celebrated influential 1960's folk raga guitarist & musical director of the infamous acid tests of the 1960s. in 1966 peter walker created a record called 'rainy day raga', where he took the sound of the eastern ragas & translated them into the consciousness of the lsd generation, america. the record is still considered to be a classic of its genre, cited as a primary influence on the new psych/folk sounds of this now generation. peter, like the great blues guitar pickers before him, disappeared from public & recorded life for decades & yet practiced & studied all along. 'spanish guitar' is the culmination of this past era, finding peter starting up where he left off with 'rainy day raga', tracing his beloved indian sound to spain, where the gypsies went to redefine spanish music & create what is now known as flamenco. [birdman](#)

folk

idan rabinovici : bedroom folk visionary folk from the acclaimed israeli singer/songwriter. a childhood that saw him moving between israel & america saw him develop a fascination with music of all kinds, from the blues to jazz, via early rock 'n' roll & folk. idan's song-writing has a maturity beyond his years - songs that are intensely personal & honest & yet universal at the same time, grounded in a nomadic tradition. independently produced & funded, it was critically acclaimed in israel & word-of-mouth saw the album gain popularity far afield. by turns enchanting & evocative, 'bedroom folk' is an extraordinary introduction to a memorable artist. *"pure musical magic...beautiful arrangements, both delicate & complicated...it is one of those albums that you keep coming back to, to immerse yourself in"* - [timeout](#). [medici cd](#)

uiscedwr : fish cat door previous winners of the bbc young folk award, uiscedwr have lived up to their numerous accolades, producing an album guaranteed to have you dancing, grooving & singing along from the 1st listen. uiscedwr is all about big power - small package, clearly demonstrated by esslemont & byrne in the duo track 'e.s.p', which challenges the role of the musicians as they explore indian & latin inspired styles with only fiddle & bodhran. underpinned by special guests james hickman on guitar & karen tweed on accordion, the extra sounds allow for awesome textures & variety. uiscedwr are the folk musicians of the future, drawing on traditions from all over the world & bringing them home. [yukka records](#)

joan baez : gone from danger (collectors edition) (2cd) following on from the success of 'ring them bells' as a collectors edition, baez' 1997 album gets a welcome re-issue. throughout her career baez has championed new singer/songwriters & this album proves no exception. in the 60's, that meant bob dylan & richard farina & in 1997 that meant sinead lohan, dar williams, betty elders & richard shindell. as per usual she proved a superior interpreter - a lightning rod for artists whose talent complemented her own unique abilities. being aided by a-list musicians from the new acoustic & newgrass fields placed the album squarely in the 90's americana style, not so far, in fact, from baez' own mid-60's music. the bonus cd features live performances from mountain stage along with the aforementioned songwriters, a never before released track & a beautiful duet, with sinead lohan, on dylan's 'to ramona'. [proper records](#)

vinyl

ducktails : ducktails 9 tracks of distinguished lo-fi surf folk/space pop cover as much ground as is possible on this 's/t' debut. it begins with a lo-fi country jam that pairs off swirling rhythm guitars with cardboard box drums. this is followed up with a strange backward organ loop & an awesome woods-style psych solo jam & some tropical droneage for company. as the record progresses it becomes trippier & more involving with layers of tropical surf drone masking subtle melodies, scrap book notation & strange mini-grooves. final track 'surf's up' seals the deal with some pure miami surf drone & hawaiian palm tree space psych. ace tunes, a strangely haunting lo-fi recording & an awesome cover sleeve, what more can you ask for? fans of high places, panda bear, lucky dragons & sun araw will definitely be feeling this. [not not fun](#)

heavy winged & inca ore : ring mining a wild collaborative lp by these 2 deep psych visionaries. one side is a studio collaboration merging the ex-baltimore trio heavy winged's pummeling psych-frenzy with cascading waves of keyboard bliss. made up of the classic bass, drums & guitar combo, the noise they generate is anything but predictable. the other side is a rare, unhinged live recording of the single time they performed live with the one woman dreambliss outfit that is inca ore. imagine heavy winged with a freaked out lead singer. strange & great. [not not fun](#)

greg haines & wouter van veldhoven : three days of fever last year, eat this media asked wouter van veldhoven & greg haines to record a record together for their label. the idea for the collaboration was born after a lovely improvisation between both soundartists during a souncheck earlier that year. the time frame to record the record was just 3 days, the location an attic room in the centre of utrecht. no fancy studio, no fancy equipment. the rough mixes were ready 3 days later & they're very special. a vinyl only release with 5 tracks full of pump organs, cello, piano & lots of tape loops. yummy! [eat this media](#)

london dirthole company : the stanley hall sessions (ltd gold vinyl lp!) london dirthole company are the capital's premier garage noise "super group" - they number amongst their ranks members of findersticks, armitage shanks, thee headcoatees, sexton ming & on this occasion, they were also joined by the rhythm section from lambchop! they proceed to let down their hair & knock out 20 short & to the point fuzzed-up garage rock beltars. rock on! [radiowave recordings](#)

teeth mountain : live on (limited) the follow-up to last year's utterly brilliant full length from dan deacon's backing band. this baltimore collective drop some really loose tribal vibes amongst a lo-fi krautrock driven velvets worship, or something akin to that...its hypnotic & pretty damn special. this is another half hour-plus of the drum/drone collective at their most zoned & looselimbbed. krautrockian droned out bliss... [not not fun](#)

acid mothers temple & the melting paraiso ufo : glorify astrological martyrdom (limited edition of 1000 copies) available in 5 different colours. acid mother's temple's 'glorify astrological martyrdom' is sure to appeal to the myriad amt fans who have made 'crystal rainbow pyramid' a new fan favourite. professionally recorded mega riffage for a super defined clean sound. kawabata & company deliver this focused rock explosion full of hyper repetitive heavy hooks & freaked out pitched up vocals. [important](#)

v/a : kung fu super sounds [de wolfe](#)

papercuts : you can have what you want [memphis industries](#)

the prodigy : invaders must die [take me to the hospital](#)

neu! : neu! (very limited) [ua](#)

neu! : 2 (very limited) [ua](#)

neu! : 75 (very limited) [ua](#)

richard swift : the atlantic ocean [secretly canadian](#)

d v d

hisham mayet (director) : palace of the winds (limited edition of 1000 copies, region 0) shot over the course of two years (2006-2008) by hisham mayet, 'palace of the winds' is an intimate & dream-like journey exploring the music of saharawi culture from guelmim in southern morocco to the mauritanian capital of nouakchott. with spectacular images from inhospitable landscapes, chimerical phenomena that transpire by the sheer remoteness of the land & haunting indigenous music from a people that have long been shrouded in mystery, this is a genre-defying film of profound beauty. features live performances by group doueh, group marwani, sadoum oueld aida & group bab sahara. [sublime frequencies](#)

m a g s

plan b : issue 45 may 2009 [grizzly bear](#), [the drones](#), [the xx](#), [patrick wolf](#) & [great escape festival](#) cd.

the wire : issue 304 – june 2009 [ornette coleman](#), [the caretaker](#), [comus](#), [dan graham](#), [andy moor](#)...

word : june 2009 [iggy pop](#), [morrisey](#), [madness](#), & [free cover](#) cd.

s i n g l e s

single of the week

pop levi : police sign 7". [counter](#)

malcolm middleton : red travellin' socks 7". [full time hobby](#)

bjork featuring thom yorke : natura v.v.limited 12". [white label](#)

cause co-motion : because because because v.limited screened 12". [slumberland](#)

team waterpolo : room 44 7". [epic](#)

kill it kid : send me an angel down 7". [one little indian](#)

sparrow & the workshop : devil song 7" [distiller records](#)

jeffrey lewis & the junkyard : roll bus roll 7". [rough trade](#)

yo majesty : don't let go 12". [domino](#)

joker : do it! / psychedelic runaway limited 12". [kapsize](#)

scuba : bleach / volt limited 12". [abucs](#)

vertical montanas : thick mugs 7". [motive sounds](#)

eels : fresh blood 7". [polydor](#)

marilyn manson : arma - goddamn-motherfucking-geddon ltd picture disc 7". [polydor](#)

the killers : the world we live in limited picture disc 7". [mercury](#)