

o u t t h i s w e e k

album of the week

liars : sisterworld

(limited deluxe 2cd / standard cd) liars return with their 5th album & it may just be their most audacious record yet, bringing together all the different elements of the band's sound – it's an art-pop thrill from start to finish. if you can imagine a nightmarish meeting point between tv on the radio, beck, suicide & the birthday party, that takes place on an eerie, post-apocalyptic night, you'll get a feel for this all enveloping, slightly threatening but utterly exhilarating ride. it's hard to imagine a more visceral, primal shot of urgency than 'scarecrows on a killer slant', a more hypnotic dance-drone than 'proud evolution' or a prettier liars' moment than the cocteau twins-esque tender vocals & synth swells on 'too much too much' & as always, these are all held together with the sizzle of digital distortion. the limited version comes in a fold-out book complete with 2nd disc of remixes & reinterpretations of all 11 tracks by the likes of thom yorke, devendra banhart, alan vega, atlas sound, tunde adebimpe (tv on the radio), melvins, chris & cosey (throbbing gristle) & more. highly recommended! "*death-draped rockabilly is the fuel behind the hardest hitting tracks; chamber music strings guide the quieter parts*" - *dusted*. [mute](#)

rock / indie / psych / kraut etc.

gorillaz : plastic beach

(cd+dvd "experience" / standard cd) who'd have imagined that 12 years ago, when blur's damon albarn started this animated side project, they'd turn into such an enduring phenomenon? although gorillaz may have just seemed like a typical rock star's idea of a groovy side project - teaming with comic-book artist jamie hewlett to create a fictional multi-media band – it turns out that this cartoon act has ruled as a pop powerhouse longer than blur did! 2d, noodle, russel & murdoc provide a front for a rotating cast of musicians & animators but the 3rd record is essentially all albarn (he writes the tunes, produces, sings, plays most of the music). however, 'plastic beach' sees the guest contributions beefed up with the likes of snoop dogg, mos def, mick jones & paul simonon (the clash), little dragon, gruff rhys, mark e.smith, bobby womack & more, all adding considerable weight to the record. the mellow rapping, disco synths, loping reggae bass lines & old-school soul all remain but this record isn't as pop as the first 2 - there aren't any go-for-the-throat dance tunes - but it's a consistent record of many peaks & very few lows. the "experience" edition gives access to lots of exclusive bonus content. [parlophone](#)

the besnard lakes : the besnard lakes are the roaring night

(cd / lp with download coupon) back in 2007, we became bewitched by the 2nd album from the montreal based collective who delivered one of the most spectacular albums of that year (or any other for that matter). needless to say, the expectations were high for album no.3 but we are pleased to report that their epic post-prog is in extra fine form! this record calls upon the influence of elo & finer parts of the alan parsons project in its orchestration. still helped by the ghost of beach boys past, it's more dennis wilson than brian & more peter green fleetwood mac than lindsay buckingham. they also introduce some new instrumentation : 12 string guitar, flute, omnichord & mellotron. it's a dark bliss-out that folds the eerie guitar epics of the last album into a wall of affected drones & atmospheric but with a toughened immediacy & grit. taking their indulgent beach boys meets queen crunchy prog a step further, the rich harmonies, roy orbison reverbs & guitar wigouts are as luxurious as ever & right from the outset you know you're in for something special. highly recommended. [jagjaguwar](#)

broken bells (james mercer of the shins / dangermouse) : broken bells

(cd / deluxe music box set – plays an exclusive soundtrack when opened) whilst we await another fix of genius post-pavement indie pop from the shins, this project between the shins frontman james mercer & uber-cool producer dangermouse fills the gap very nicely indeed. musically broken bells aren't far away from the psych-finged jingle jangle of the shins, with plenty of oddball pop moments all encased in a lysergic coating, however dangermouse ups the trip-factor giving tracks like 'your head is on fire' the feel of a long lost sonic experiment from brian wilson's 'smile' sessions, elsewhere album opener 'the high road' offers up big vocal harmonies, lilting acoustic guitar topped with a toytown melodica. a lovely record that fans of shins & pop of the more grand, eccentric nature will enjoy. "*an intriguing genetic mix of modern psychedelia & eccentric pop*" 4/5 – *mojo*. [columbia](#)

black rebel motorcycle club : beat the devil

(limited deluxe cd with 2 bonus tracks / standard cd) the 6th studio album from the san fran fuzzy rockers. having been joined by drummer leah shapiro of the raveonettes, they move away from 2008's instrumental & experimental 'the effects of 333' & return to the melodic country gospel of 'howl' whilst also referring heavily to their self-titled 2001 debut's hard-hitting sound. 'beat the devil's tattoo' is a powerful record full of fuzzy bass & guitar swagger with peter hayes & robert been sounding as determined & relentless as ever. it's much more vital & visceral than 'baby 81' so if you fell out of love with the band at this point, be prepared to fall back in love with them again. the foot-to-the-floor rock & roll is perfectly balanced with industrial blues & mellow acoustics, resulting in a record that proves to be pretty irresistible. "*the record messrs hayes & levan been have been threatening to make since the band's formation...feels like a carefully constructed amalgam of the best parts of all its predecessors*" – *drowned in sound*. [abstract dragon / v2](#)

fenn o'berg (christian fennesz, jim o'rourke & peter rehberg) : in stereo

after a hiatus of almost 9 years, the legendary trio of christian fennesz, jim o'rourke & peter rehberg have returned with a new studio album (technically the 1st studio album as previous releases were edits of live performances). they spent a week in studio gok sound, tokyo to lay down some stunning electronic works. whereas previously the emphasis was on a chaotic blend of found samples mangled through their mobile computing systems to create a humorous oddball sound, 'in stereo' implements a wider instrumental palette of analogue & digital synthesis, guitar, piano, bass & percussion. what they do maintain is the ability to make a near psychedelic audio blend where it's impossible to determine who does what - it has the feel of a more in-depth interrogation of electronic sound, divided into 6 tracks. there's so much movement, so many layers & such density here that it reels you in & gives you loads to absorb & interpret on repeated visits. this slice of magical electronic experimentalism is one for fans of ben frost, leyland kirby or keith fullerton whitman. [editions mego](#)

the kissaway trail : sleep mountain

the danish quintet are back with another slice of big-sounding, shimmering indie-pop, taking the sky-scraping, dream-like moments of their debut & filling them out into something even more anthemic. superb album opener 'sdp' makes their intentions clear with church bells, barnstorming sounding piano & a baroque, almost choral midsection – it's 6 minutes of convention-defying alt pop with knobs on. there are also some less expected departures to keep listeners on their toes, with 'new lipstick' seeing the band venture far up tempo with almost dancefloor orientated results, whilst the chattering drums & neat arpeggios of 'friendly fire' hints at a perhaps surprising admiration for early new order. plenty for fans of flaming lips, arcade fire & granddaddy to enjoy here. 4/5 – *times*, "*there's plenty to fall in love with*" – *bbc*. [bella union](#)

new young pony club : the optimist

(cd / lp) nypc return with the long awaited follow up to 2007's triumphant glitterball disco punk assault 'fantastic playroom'. on album no.2 the jabbing guitars & nauseous, detuned synths have more to do with new wave than disco, with the title track setting a growling bassline against swirling strings & stuttering snare rolls while singer tahita bulmer delivers her trademark monotone vocals. energetic, hook-laden stuff that shows a more serious & mature approach from the band. "*the post-disco comedown is far from dreary*" – *q*. [the numbers](#)

the chieftains & ry cooder : san patricio

(standard cd / special cd & dvd edition) the much-anticipated new collaboration between ry cooder (whose glittering career includes such milestones as buena vista social club & 'paris, texas') & the legendary irish band the chieftains. the record takes as its inspiration the story of a group of 19th century irish immigrants to the usa, who were conscripted into the us army, in their war against mexico. the men of the san patricio brigade defected to the enemy side & fought with their fellow catholics against the american army, before meeting a tragic end when the war was lost. the music is a perfect fusion of the sounds of ireland with the sounds of mexico & the southern usa. guest stars on this record include liam neeson, linda ronstadt & mexican musicians carlos nunez, lila downs & los cenizales. the dvd on the special edition includes 4 performance videos plus a "making of" documentary. *"the chieftains lay a vibrant carpet of colour but, veering between joyous & heartbreaking, the fiery mexican element is what makes it so compelling"* 4/5 – [mojo](#). [concord](#)

coconuts : coconuts

not the band to provide the soundtrack to a tropical summer drinking pina colodas, as you might expect from their name. instead, theirs is a sound rooted in inherent darkness, influenced by early-80s post punk, no wave (fellow australians the birthday party come to mind, although these guys work at a much slower, hazy pace) & the bleakest of world views. this is an almost disorienting experience, created by homemade guitars that seem to leak feedback, built by founding members tim evans & jordan redaelli. the duo met up with pacific north westerer daniel mitha, whose primitive drumming completed the group. it should also be mentioned that this record has killer harmonies. these three men play slow, simple & sinister grooves - creepy slow tempos, haunted house echo & methodically plodding minimalism, topped off with some sleepy, spacemen3-like vocal contributions make up this ace record of dark, distant psych music. highly recommended. [no quarter](#)

fursaxa : mycorrhizae realm

fursaxa is tara burke (formerly a member of the band un), who started her fursaxa project in 1999 after un disbanded. her 7th full length album is a 1st, as it's a studio recording, whereas all of the previous releases have been recorded at home on a 4 track. it seems to have come about from her work as part of the valerie project (the group assembled in tribute to the czech cult film, 'valerie & her week of wonders'). she's joined by fellow members of that side-project, greg weeks (the espers frontman who produces the album), helena espvall (cello) & mary lattimore (harp & co-writing on 2 songs). burke has always explored the more interesting outer edges of free-folk, making lo-fi, slightly grating, dark witchy albums & although this one eschews the lo-fi approach, it still retains the haunting & slightly disturbing atmospheres she is so adept at creating. recommended for fans of islaaja, christina carter or mv & ee. [atp](#)

din a testbild : programm 6

few bands of the german post punk/new wave era can lay claim to "cult" status but din a testbild most certainly can. formed in 1978 by mark eins & gudrun gut, the combo played a significant role in defining the avant-garde music of berlin & were among the pioneers of electroclash, long before the genre even existed. exactly 30 years after the release of their debut lp 'programm 1' on klaus schulze's ic record label, the berliners have picked up the thread of their album series with 'programm 6' in 2010. mark eins is joined by long-term members nutty norman & ralf zimmermann, as well as axel brand, plus guest musicians geritt meijer, the legendary berlin guitarist of the band pvc & vocalist bettina schoch. they aim straight for the dancefloor on 'programm 6': driving basslines, hypnotic grooves, dark harmonies, mechanical sounds, expressive shouts - all given an extra-special flair through the sporadic intervention of industrial instrumentation such as geritt meijer's metal machine guitar or nutty norman's chaoscillator & on occasion, even through bettina schoch's rousing vocals. an intense, dancedable, electronic, expressive aural collage. [bureau b](#)

white hinterland : kairos

(cd / lp) white hinterland return with a stunning, forward thinking & outright pop record. having stepped away from the piano-oriented baroque pieces that characterized previous records, it is movement into a wholly new sound - a progressive, washy r&b, with a playful, dubby backbone. we find white hinterland exploring the edges of minimal pop, accomplishing a delicate but lively seduction through deep, patient bass throbs, prismatic synth textures & direct, intimate songs sung with an empowered gravitas. here casey diene tailors the acrobatics of her former songwriting into a slender focus, folding it into deeper grooves. using just one mic, electronics, programming & an arsenal of percussion & instruments, this is an enchanting record that explores similar territories to dirty projectors, the xx, school of seven bells & tune-yards. *"one of the first great crossover records of 2010"* – [nme](#). [dead oceans](#)

titus andronicus : the monitor

the jersey punks follow up to their critically acclaimed 'the airing of grievances', is a 65 minute concept album about the american civil war, released on the anniversary of a historic civil war battle - 10 tracks varying in length between 1:55 & 14:02. the band remain messy, scuzzy & lo-fi but they are now operating as a far more accomplished unit. members of the hold steady, wye oak, ponytail & vivian girls all appear on the album in the form of spoken-word interludes in which they portray civil war-era historical figures - hold steady frontman craig finn plays walt whitman, vivian girls' leader cassie ramone plays jefferson davis etc. the record was mastered by greg calbi who the band chose because he is the only person alive who can claim involvement in both 'the chemistry of common life' by fucked up & 'bat out of hell ii: back into hell' by meat loaf! *"[you] will want to weep & dance simultaneously. simply brilliant"* 9/10 – [clash](#), *"so frighteningly intense & packed with ideas that you can't help but be impressed"* 4/5 – [uncut](#). [merok](#)

yellow swans : going places

(cd / lp - with a bonus cd of extra material) sadly this is the final studio album from yellow swans & their most astonishing to date, conjoining visceral noise drones with an epic yet introspective pop sensibility. the resulting collection is distilled & reflective, retaining the grit & damage of their earlier work but adding layers of harmony & maybe more surprisingly, pulsing rhythms. the improvisational, psychedelic washes that have always enriched their sound are tempered & controlled, leaving an almost kosmische narrative, while mindels' guitar is allowed to play foil to swanson's piercing noise. a superbly haunting & engrossing listen for fans of tim hecker, fennesz & brian eno. [type](#)

jonas reinhardt : powers of audition

jonas reinhardt continues his cosmic flight inward. the instrumentation from his brilliant (& much loved by us residents) debut album expands here to include acoustic drum patterns, guitars & woodwinds alongside synthesizers & electronics. together, these voices seamlessly twist & meld into a singular aural journey. this is music of the spheres for an electronic era where new age visions are re-imagined through a lens of experimental rock. the result is a mesmerizing journey to cracked & digitized moonscapes where reinhardt's undoubted influences (john carpenter, tangerine dream, pink floyd, goblin, harmonia) are displayed openly. this record is more propulsive, more driven & more beaty than his previous outing & as such is likely to appeal as much to fans of his kraut forefathers as it is to fans of lindstromm & other cosmic disco explorers. top stuff! [kranky](#)

motorpsycho : heavy metal fruit

(lp / cd) motorpsycho's latest album finds the norwegian trio on drastically effective form. clocking in at just over an hour, 5 of the 6 tracks here are expansive prog freakouts sitting around comparatively brief piano ballad 'close your eyes'. opening with a minute's silence before descending into a maelstrom of heady grooves amidst a strange brew of time signatures & determined instrumentation, 'starhammer' delivers a series of blows that shows this lot really mean business. influenced by luminaries such as king crimson, cream, jimi hendrix, led zeppelin & the beatles, it's also easy enough to pick out the rivulets of sun ra & john coltrane that run through the channel. nowhere is this clearer than on 'the bomb-proof roll & beyond' which features trumpet sitting atop a slithering bass groove that pushes the track through to its eventual reverb-soaked sonic youth inspired haze. *"the 1st essential rock album of the decade? quite possibly"* – [the line of best fit](#). [tune grammoion](#)

eleh : location momentum

the enigma that is eleh began back in 1999 as an exploration of analog synthesis, emphasising low frequency oscillation & resonant acoustic phenomena. eleh's work highlights the physical presence of sound as it has been inspired by the physical world. 'location momentum' is a set of 5 new recordings. the stark, minimal, deeply immersive drones of these precisely structured recordings are very much at home on the touch label & are likely to appeal to fans of kevin drumm. *"the stuff that eleh sets in motion from whatever electronic sound generators he/she deploys represents a measured & methodical paring away of all that might appear superfluous, baroque & rococo. each of the tracks here consists of just a handful & discrete (& discrete) but highly charged sound events that emerge, overlap, recede & reverberate at critical frequencies over extended durations"* - tony herrington, *the wire*. [touch](#)

mark beazley (rothko) : stateless

after 11 years recording music as rothko, 'stateless' marks the 1st time mark beazley has released a record under his own name. his distinctive bass guitar style remains fundamental to these compositions but the tracks are often more orchestral in texture & in places, even more minimal in arrangement than past rothko material. the album was inspired mainly by time spent at a solitary retreat in the brecon hills & partly by his composition for the discovery channel documentary, 'mars: quest for life', a film about the phoenix lander probe that landed on mars in 2008. there's a greater variety in these recordings but there's also his usual careful & precise arrangements & an often profound stillness that's a natural progression from his rothko work & akin to the likes of labradford & rachel's. lovely stuff. [trace](#)

sambassadeur : european

sambassadeur started as a diy version of abba & are perhaps the epitome of the uk's idea of a swedish pop group – sophisticated, fey & in thrall to spector & the girl groups of the 60s. they, alongside the concretes et al, lead an explosive swedish pop movement at the dawn of the noughties & they plough a similar furrow to camera obscura, belle & sebastian. their sound has grown with the recording budget & on 'european' they've finally accomplished the grand, classic & orchestrated album they've always wanted to. they needed a string quartet, 3 drummers, a saxophone player, clarinet & more to pull it off but pull it off they did!... *"one part abba, one part c86"* 7/10 – *pitchfork*, *"there's more to sambassadeur than the odd abba-echo or spector tom-drum reverberation: they have heart"* 4/5 – *the skinny*. [labrador](#)

burning star core : papercuts theatre

operating from his base in cincinnati, violinist & noisy dronester c. spencer yeh has released music under the name burning star core for over 15 years. the construction of this latest opus comes from the collaging of 66 live recordings, captured over the course of an 11 year period. the result is a relatively lo-fi affair, for the most part emphasizing the noisy drone side of burning star core. while it gets pretty psychedelic at times the album isn't afraid to venture into the surreal. with collaborators including trevor tremaine, mike shifflet, robert beatty & others, the extended pieces are internally consistent but each have a distinct personality. the 1st part is perhaps the most hypnotic; drums, buried in the mix, lend propulsion to the otherwise textural sound. elsewhere, peaks of frenetic freeform sound & crashing drums collapse into a calm buzzing, sparse atmospheres broken by intermittent squeaks & squawks. [no quarter](#)

black daniel : let's get sued

black daniel is a transatlantic hook up between london-based brothers luke & lamik2000 & nyc's craig louis higgins jnr., who all met on the dancefloor of a lower east side disco & quickly discovered a mutual love of animal tranquilizers & long walks in the rain. scuzzy, distorted, garage sounds, the shared vocal duties & interplay between lamik2000 & craig & the brazen, stomping songwriting make this a band with a very identifiable sound. their quintessential garage swagger plays on velvet underground comparisons perfectly, infusing a stomping, raucous glam rhythm into the mix, especially on tracks like 'look away sancho' & 'move like royalty', while on tracks like 'money' & 'lonely screen boy' the guys slow things down to a dirty choral psychedelia akin to the likes of nick cave & the doors. *"an innovative transatlantic fused concoction of the blues, swaggering, street-life soul & a general rock n' roll nonchalance coupled to deep electro tinges"* – *clash*, *"dirty, electro-powered rock n' roll combined with sleazy new york glam"* – *fact*. [underdogs records](#)

amy macdonald : a curious thing

hook-laden slices of 3-minute pop gems in abundance on this sophomore album from amy macdonald. by & large the subject matter here is the ups & downs, ins & outs of the fame game & it's to her credit that these tales never come across as caustic or bitter; in fact, they're told in such a catchy & joyful manner that this record may well come to be known as the musical equivalent of a charm offensive. recorded at paul weller's studio (indeed the modfather pops up to add guitar here & there), this is assured pop, with macdonald's strong voice reminiscent of dolores o'riordan, even sinead o'connor. *"a bold, grand statement of intent, full of songs of epic sweep that build to undeniable choruses...a triumphant return"* – *bbc*. [mercury](#)

aidan baker : liminoid/lifeforms

'liminoid/lifeforms' is, strictly speaking a solo release from the nadja mainman but there are in fact no less than 8 guest musicians helping out on the recording. these include canadian noise legend knurl (a.k.a. alan bloor) as well as members of arc, picastro, forest city lovers & whisper room. 'liminoid' is a composition for large ensemble exploring sonic immersion in drones & textures, rhythms & pulsations. incorporating composed & improvised segments, the piece uses elongation of sound & layered polyphony in an attempt to create a liminal &/or numinous state. the piece features a powerful vocal performance with every member sharing the vocal duties. 'lifeforms' is a composition for strings, prepared/effected guitar & amplified metal works. the piece also incorporates written & improvised material to stunning effect. just when you thought you didn't need another aidan baker release, he goes & puts this out to prove otherwise! [alien8](#)

the high wire : the sleep tape

very aptly titled "the sleep tape" is the debut from london band the high wire. this is dreamy psych-pop through & through, full of woozy bursts of bliss, twinkling keys & multi-layered vocals. opener 'midnight bell' features the swooning vocals that become a cornerstone of the album, while 'odds & evens' provokes carefree meanders through misty fields, as the tender acoustic guitar plays over the swirling synths. 'a future ending' shows a heavier side, as a super-distorted riff is accompanied by the hypnotic cycle of the thudding drums. all in all very likable, bringing to mind the fuzzy pop of joy zipper. [grandpa stan ltd](#)

the automatic : tear the signs down

the welsh indie-rockers release the 1st album from their own label, armoured records. their 3rd effort reverts toward the sound of their debut 'not accepted anywhere', combining synth hooks with big rock choruses, while still diversifying their sound. this is paul mullen's 2nd full album with the band & his presence is evident here on the frequent 3 part harmonies that he shares with robin hawkins & james frost. this vocal interplay is illustrated perfectly on the single 'interstate'. [armoured records](#)

john hiatt : the open road

looking at life through the rearview mirror was the inspiration for hiatt's new album. indeed, this is classic hiatt, picking up the tempo & returning to rock following his previous acclaimed 'same old man'. a bluesy, heartland-soaked musical excursion, featuring meaty support from guitarist doug lancio, bassist patrick o'hearn & drummer kenneth blevins, with wittily informed nods to such influences as chuck berry, the rolling stones & willie dixon & plenty of the rock soulfulness that's integral to the sound he's been honing for decades. [new west](#)

old canes : feral harmonic

the 2nd album from old canes is bold & loud from the off. folk music at heart, the presentation is far from traditional, with the songs drawing elements from different influences (such as indie & punk rock) & the rulebook of contemporary recording thrown out the window. 'little bird courage' launches the album with joyous barrelling drums, furiously strummed guitars & glistening toy piano that erupts into a chorus of frumpets. cautiously plucked banjo forewarns the ominous lessons of 'frust', while cascading guitars, trumpets & pounding drums build to a boisterous roar, contrasting the lyrical lover's lament in 'stuck'. the album closes with wistful 'southern radio' which features only singer chris crisci's weathered voice & an acoustic guitar. one for fans of the hold steady or the more raucous side of bright eyes. [saddle creek](#)

john foxx : my lost city

for 2 or more decades these tracks, recorded between 1981-85, have languished in storage. after being discovered in 2008 a minimal amount of remixing was done to spruce up these glacial, ghostly, almost ambient tracks & the result is 'my lost city.' foxx had built a studio in (at the time) rundown east london where he tried to draw connections between his banks of synthesizers & "hymns & cities, churches, electricity & memory." the recordings were discarded as unsatisfied & unfinished fragments at the time but when foxx revisited his work he felt as if these tracks were "like a time capsule discovered from under the streets. made by someone else. like an old radio tuned into a long gone station. curious psychic electricals, crackling distantly from the speakers." [metamatic](#)

joan armatrading : the charming life

joan armatrading has been impressing masses with both her immense guitar talents & folk & blues accented pop since her 1972 debut 'whatever's for us'. this new record finds her returning to a more rock/pop format - from the anthemic opener & title track 'this charming life' to the hard rocking 'heading back to new york city' & the hands in the air 'best dress on', this album shows she still possesses a powerful voice & the ability to write strong songs to go with it. [hypertension](#)

mat riviere : follow your heart

mat riviere is a norwich-based solo artist whose debut has already met with considerable media acclaim & a hysterical response from the blogosphere. he creates cinematic songs with minimal, rhythmic backing & intriguing lyrics sung in a distinctive, plaintive voice. organ & looped notes pile onto clanking rhythms, creating a sparse but evocative sonic construction. "genius bleak pop" - nme, "haunting & mesmerising...simply fantastic" - artrocker, "doom laden pop with reverb strings" - drowned in sound, "glitchy, lo-fi, minimal pop heartaches...a gorgeous collection of laconic, tragic songs" - the line of best fit. [brainlove records](#)

duke special

one of ireland's most successful musical exports, duke special, returns with 3 unique new projects, being released simultaneously as stand alone cds & also in a box set under the title 'the stage, a book & the silver screen'. as this project demonstrates, duke special is more complex than your average singer/songwriter. a stand alone, vaudevillian ringmaster, duke special delivers music that gleams with golden age warmth & soul. "a new-age minstrel whose sound mixes elton john with old irish crooners the chieftains, plus a bit of white stripes thrash thrown in for good measure" - daily mail, "bewitching music" - q, "a major talent" - mojo, "magically uplifting" - the evening standard, "in a world of his own" - independent.

: the silent world of hector mann

'the silent world of hector mann' is based on "the book of illusions" by paul auster - recorded by steve albini in chicago & featuring neil hannon & ed harcourt. [reel to reel](#)

: presents the songs of mother courage & her children

'...mother courage' is the music that duke has written to a new production of brecht's "mother courage" & has just played to 100,000 people at the national theatre - the entire production is based around his music & the band's performance. the show is being taken to broadway next year. [reel to reel](#)

: the stage, the book & the silver screen

(limited 3cd) contains : 1) 'the silent world of hector mann' 2) 'huckleberry finn' - an unfinished musical by kurt weill based on huckleberry finn - duke is the first person ever to record this suite of songs 3) 'presents the songs of mother courage & her children'. [reel to reel](#)

jimi hendrix : are you experienced

(limited reissue - cd & dvd remastered collectors digi-pack edition) one of the most stunning debuts in rock history & one of the definitive albums of the psychedelic era. hendrix synthesized various elements of the cutting edge of 1967 rock into music that sounded both futuristic & rooted in the best traditions of rock, blues, pop & soul. it was his mind-boggling guitar work that got most of the ink, however it wouldn't have meant much without his excellent material, whether psychedelic frenzy ('foxy lady', 'manic depression', 'purple haze'), instrumental freak-out jams ('third stone from the sun'), blues ('red house', 'hey joe'), or tender, poetic compositions ('the wind cries mary') that demonstrated the breadth of his songwriting talents. dvd contains 'making of' mini documentary. [sony](#)

jimi hendrix : axis: bold as love

(limited reissue - cd & dvd remastered collectors digi-pack edition) jimi hendrix's 2nd album followed up his groundbreaking debut with a solid collection of tunes & great interactive playing between himself, noel redding, mitch mitchell & the recording studio itself. hendrix stretched further musically than the 1st album but even more so as a songwriter. he was still quite capable of coming up with spacey rockers ('you got me floating', 'up from the skies' & 'little miss lover') but the beautiful, wistful ballads ('little wing', 'castles made of sand') & the title track set closer, show remarkable growth & depth as a tunesmith, harnessing curtis mayfield soul guitar to dylan-esque lyrical imagery. dvd contains 'making of' mini documentary. [sony](#)

jimi hendrix : electric ladyland

(limited reissue - cd & dvd remastered collectors digi-pack edition) undoubtedly one of the greatest double albums of all time, 'electric ladyland' saw hendrix spread his wings in glorious fashion. songs such as 'voodoo child (slight return),' 'crosstown traffic' & his definitive cover of dylan's 'all along the watchtower' saw him leave his contemporaries in the dust. his guitar playing was customarily incendiary but it was his mastery of the recording studio that set this record apart. sadly it would prove to be the experience's swansong but what a way to go! quite simply a peerless record. dvd contains 'making of' mini documentary. [sony](#)

jimi hendrix : first rays of the new rising sun

(limited reissue - cd & dvd remastered collectors digi-pack edition) this was an attempt to recreate the album jimi hendrix was working on at the time of his death in 1970, as close as is feasible to how he would have wanted it. the compilation of these songs allows us to see the many sides of this innovative artist. alongside runaway flights of fancy ('stepping stone') & overcharged rock/funk explosions ('room full of mirrors') are beautiful ballads ('angel') & rollicking numbers that point to a bob dylan influence ('my friend'). famous friends dot the sonic landscape (steve winwood & chris wood on 'ezy rider' & the ronettes on 'earth blues') but hendrix remains the centre of a musical universe, whose light was snuffed out far too soon. dvd contains 'making of' mini documentary. [sony](#)

jimi hendrix : band of gypsies

(reissue - limited remastered collectors digi-pack edition) this was the only live recording authorized by hendrix before his death. helping him out were long time friends billy cox on bass & buddy miles on the drums. along with this new rhythm section, hendrix took these shows as an opportunity to showcase much of the new material he had been working on. the music was a seamless melding of rock, funk & r&b & tunes like 'message to love' & 'power to love' showed a new lyrical direction as well. although he could be an erratic live performer, for these shows, hendrix gave perhaps his finest performances. one of the greatest live albums ever. [sony](#)

jimi hendrix : valleys of neptune

(new 12 track digi-pack format of recordings, never previously available, including bonus video footage) though there have been many posthumous releases from jimi hendrix's archives since his tragic death, this isn't meant to be a "lost" album. rather, it's a look at the creative period in hendrix's life between the 1968 release of 'electric ladyland' & his legendary appearance at woodstock the following summer. the music here reflects a time where hendrix, finding his way with a new band while fighting contractual problems, was blossoming creatively. featuring reworked hits like 'fire' & 'red house' as well as fully-realized songs that have never officially been released, the album shows that hendrix was embarking in a new direction, one that would later be heard on 'band of gypsies'. an essential snapshot into a part of jimi's life that's rarely been heard. [sony](#)

jimi hendrix : smash hits

(reissue) the 1st & original compilation album of jimi hendrix experience material, originally released in 1968. includes 'purple haze', 'fire', 'the wind cries mary', 'hey joe', 'foxy lady', 'manic depression' & more. [sony](#)

jimi hendrix : experience hendrix

(reissue) another hendrix 'best of', this is a more expanded version of 'smash hits', including 'purple haze', 'fire', 'the wind cries mary', 'hey joe', 'foxy lady', 'star spangled banner', 'voodoo child (slight return)', 'little wing' & more. [sony](#)

pavement : quarantine the past - the best of pavement

(cd / 2lp) 2010 is the year of the long-awaited pavement reunion tour, already including a sold out atp weekend & four central park shows, headlining major festivals all over the world & in general underlining the frenzy that's awaiting the first performance of one of the most important bands of the 1990s. this re-mastered 23 track greatest hits collection, chosen by the band, ranges from their top 10 "modern rock" hit 'cut your hair' to nearly all their singles, some underrated album tracks, 3 choice pre-domino cuts & one obscure compilation track singing the praises of rem. the tracks span the entirety of pavement's career from 1989 to 1999, from the scratchy & mysterious sounds of their early vinyl-only releases to the rich, multilayered warmth of their final recordings. although the compilation does not include any unreleased material, it definitely digs deeper than the hits. [domino records](#)

tours : the album of the year that never was

in 1979, they were one of the hottest properties in the music industry. they could count john peel as an überfan – he played their single 'language school' on 50 consecutive nights of his show & declared it his 2nd favourite record of all time - & the music industry hordes tracked them down to poole for a feeding frenzy. they eventually signed to virgin & ceo simon draper declared them punk's answer to lennon & mccartney. 1980 should have been their year - instead the meddling label & internal conflicts tore the band asunder & they slipped into obscurity. the band have since been mythologized on countless comps & the powerpop scene & so cherry red have stepped in to compile their recordings & release the album that never was. maybe now they'll get their due. [cherry red](#)

spandau ballet : journeys to glory

one of the most successful & enduring groups of the new romantics era. now their debut album, 'journeys to glory', receives the complete remastering treatment & comes bursting with bonus material & previously unreleased tracks, all packaged together in a 6-panel digipack. this record reached no 5 in march of 1981 & appears remastered on cd1 of this reissue alongside the original 7" versions of singles, 'the freeze', 'musclebound' & it's b-side 'glow'. cd2 brings together the original 12" mix of their first single, 'to cut a long story short', further 12" remixes of 'the freeze' & 'the glow' & a previously unreleased bbc session from march 1981. [emi](#)

spandau ballet : diamond

one of the most successful & enduring groups of the new romantics era. now their 2nd album, 'diamond', receives the complete remastering treatment & comes bursting with bonus material & previously unreleased tracks, all packaged together in a 6-panel digipack. originally released in 1982, 'diamond' comes complete on cd1 with bonus remixes of their singles 'chant no. 1', 'instinction', 'paint me down' & 'she loved like diamond' - all of which are appearing for the 1st time in cd format. cd2 collects together the b-sides from these singles, extra 12" remixes & a previously unreleased live bbc show from april 1982. [emi](#)

dance/electonica

the knife in collaboration with mt. sims & planningtorock : tomorrow, in a year

(2cd) so after the awesomeness of 2007's 'silent shout' & karin nipping off to create the darkly elaborate fever ray project, it was highly unlikely the knife were going to return with a run-of-the-mill album. but a 90 minute collaborative opera soundtrack based on darwin's 'origin of species'? seriously? originally the knife were commissioned to make the music but they thought this vast subject couldn't be interpreted by only two brains, so they invited mt.sims & planningtorock to try a more collaborative process for the first time, not only to have a more fun & interesting process but also to capture the huge width of the theme of darwin & evolution. the resulting record is everything you could want from such a bonkers concept & so much more – late 70's/early 80's kate bush instrumentation & vocal operatics, hildur guddnadottir's deeply affecting cello, harsh electronic minimalism & plenty of haunting space & atmospherics. it's not a smooth ride by any means but it is a fabulously experimental piece of work that never feels laboured & always thrills. as it says on the extensive album biography, "closed headphones & open mind are strongly recommended". remarkable stuff! [brille](#)

gonjasufi : a sufi & a killer

(cd / 2lp) over in the us, the west coast beat experiments continue with this album by the mystical gonjasufi being the new addition to the cannon. imagine if devendra banhart dropped the tweeness & properly got his psych on with just a stack of dusty old vinyl & a sampler for company & you might be close to imagining what's in store here. with flying lotus, gaslamp killer & mainframe providing the beats & samples (all of which incidentally are completely obscure & no doubt rare as heck), gonjasufi lays down his vocals, which are all earthly rasp & entrancing psych-rock chants. this is utterly fantastic! - fans of any of the producers involved & finders keepers will not be disappointed. "a cosmic headtrip sounding like screamin' jay hawkins covering m.i.a., as remixed by portishead. in a good way...a contender for album of the year" – [guardian](#). [warp](#)

andrew thomas : between buildings & trees

gorgeous, lush sunset pop ambience from new zealander andrew thomas. inspired by the dramatic scenery of his homeland, thomas put these compositions together using old cassette-based sounds & 4-track noodlings along with more explicitly electronic endeavours. as he puts it, "when working on this album i would often be looking out to the see the hills, the mountains. i would do this a lot in the evenings - dusk, with the sun/light in it's dying moments", which succinctly sums up the feel of this album. a very lovely slice of ambience that fans of gas, fennesz, vladislav delay & william basinski should definitely check. [kompakt](#)

deru : say goodbye to useless

beautiful, haunting instrumental hip hop is the order of the day on this 3rd album from th la-based producer. taking the classic dj shadow 'endroducing' template, he twists his beats & soundscapes into something eerie, melodic & sombre, dipping more than a toe into ambient & classical pools along the way. this is widescreen, cinematic fare (perhaps no surprise given his background in sound design & film scoring) that's well constructed & forward thinking in its approach. fans of flying lotus, dj shadow & amon tobin should certainly give this a go. [mush](#)

fluxion : perfused

new album of killer ice-cool techno from greek producer konstantinos soubllis. being on the echochord label should give you an inkling of what to expect (minimal, dub-infused 4/4) & certainly it doesn't disappoint. opener 'horizons' creates a slow dub feeling moving through time & space, creating musical phrases that never repeat, while 'fluctuations' builds slowly into an well-paced slice of atmospheric minimalism. fans of maurizio & studio 1 should definitely get a kick out of this. [echochord](#)

v/a : rinse 11 - mixed by oneman

the rinse series rolls on, continuing to deliver super tight mixes from djs championing dubstep, funky & garage flavours. this, the 11th instalment, finds oneman repping an upfront selection of funky & dubstep cuts for the ravers, all blended & delivered with his quick-fire mixing skills. artists featured here include ramadanman, kode 9, mariyn, geeneus, joker, starkey, zomby, headhunter & more. another winner in this excellent mix series. [rinse](#)

crookers : tons of friends

tons of friends? italian party starters crookers ain't kidding! this album features 20 tracks, with a guest on every single one including (deep breath) soulwax, kelis, will.i.am, spank rock, roisin murphy, kid cu-di, miike snow, heck even tim burgess makes it down to the party. it's rousing, dancefloor-slaying business, with plenty of ravey stabs, squelching baselines & meaty drums. if you're up for some big-time party vibes (major lazer/soulwax/simian mobile disco) you need this. "a gloriously crazed how-to lesson in no-holes, speaker melting party music" 4/5 - q. [southern fried records](#)

ricardo villalobos : alcachofa

(reissue) this seminal classic from villalobos was recently voted album of the decade by the world's most respected online dance website resident advisor, beating the likes of lcd soundsystem & daft punk to pole position. for most, this was where villalobos began. a little known dj & producer with a few solid tracks to his name in 2003, there were no indications that this release would help change the course of electronic music. a revelation in both imagination & scope. the particular genius of this album is the amount of space, fine attention to detail & the fact that it's not obvious, yet it grows on you the more you hear it, revealing new secrets on every listen. an essential purchase for anyone interested in the evolution of electronic dance music as we know it. [playhouse](#)

hip hop

rob swift : the architect

rob swift is a turntablist extraordinaire & member of dj supergroup the x-ecutioners. on this, his debut for mike patton's ipecac label, he wanted to fuse hip hop with classical music to produce something new & forward-thinking. if this is sounding like a bad idea, then think again - swift ably pulls it off, with an intricately produced set that shows off his deck skills whilst still managing to be very listenable, chopping between old crackling drum breaks, weird obscure sounds & fragments of classical music chopped, cut & scratched within an inch of its life. like rjd2, kid koala or mixmaster mike? then you'll definitely dig this. [ipecac records](#)

georgia ann muldrow & declaime : someoathship

soulful, underground hip hop here from singer georgia anne muldrow & rapper declaime. this is straight up, unpretentious fare with some excellent guest production from flying lotus (who excels on his beat for 'mages sages'), oddisee & oh no, as well as guest spots from kool g rap, prince po, imno & more. fans erykah badu, mos def & madlib should definitely lend this an ear. [mello music group](#)

blitz the ambassador : stereotype

upfront party hip hop with world & jazz influences on this debut from blitz the ambassador. born & raised in ghana, he then moved to new york where he now resides & certainly his roots shine through in his music. utilizing live horns, strings & percussion, this has an irresistible & lively feel reminiscent of acts such as the roots, as well as fat freddy's drop. [jakarta records](#)

ras g : beat soup 2

(limited) slowly but surely ras g is rising to the top of the scene that includes among it's number flying lotus & gaslamp killer. 'beat soup 2' is another transmission dead from the low end theory japan tour mix series. as is typical it comes with no track list but with ras g at the controls, you can be assured the selection is bleeping mellow-tempered & dub-weighted hip hop & r'n'b with interjections of spiralling synth-driven wonk & trademark blazing siren action. if our ears aren't mistaken, this classy set includes tracks by del the funky homosapien, uffie & some of the rising stars of the wonky scene. ras g is clearly a man with impeccable taste & his sublime mixing skills make sure this mix flows seamlessly. [low end theory](#)

soul

healer selecta : lets get it started

block rocking, floor-filling funk is the order of the day on this beat heavy banger from healer selecta. healer selecta is in fact one van serrano-fontova, a guitarist, dj & record collector with an eclectic thirst for any music that's raw, exciting, retro & powerful - from soul, rocksteady, afrobeat & samba to r&b, latin boogaloo & surf - it all gets a look in here, resulting in a prime-time party record that's sure to keep the freestyle & tru thoughts heads happy. [freestyle records](#)

diana ross : touch me in the morning (expanded edition)

(2cd) 'touch me in the morning' was a critical & commercial success that featured the no.1 title track but there was much more to the story than a blazing return to pop form, as we discover in a new 2cd set. this lovingly produced reissue includes a newly remastered version of the original album, plus an entire unreleased album : 'to the baby', a collection of songs honouring her newborn daughter rhonda. as an extra bonus, added are 2 songs recorded during the same timeline : 'kewpie doll', written & co-produced by smokey robinson & 'when we grow up', miss ross's contribution to marlo thomas' 1972 album 'free to be...you & me'. [umc](#)

jazz

bebel gilberto : all in one

known for her adventurous blends of brazilian, european & electronic pop styles, gilberto continues to blur musical boundaries on 'all in one' but the sensual rhythms of her native country dominate the production courtesy of carlinhos brown, didi gutman (brazilian girls), mark ronson, daniel jobim & john king of the acclaimed dust brothers. some arrangements dazzle with sensitive instrumentation, folding in strings & woodwinds & some thump with irresistible beats. most of the love songs are rendered beautifully in portuguese, bebel's native language. although different producers contributed to 'all in one', the album maintains a cohesive feel throughout. the dap kings, the dynamite band best known for supporting sharon jones & amy winehouse, lay down the propulsive groove on 'the real thing'. in addition to silky originals, the album includes other imaginative covers, such as bob marley's 'sun is shining' & carmen miranda's 'chica chica boom chic' as well remaking 'bim bom', a song first recorded by her father, bossa nova guitar great joão gilberto. [verve](#)

v/a : soul jazz records presents message from the tribe

(reissue - cd / lp) the long out of print anthology of tribe records, the detroit jazz & funk collective recently reformed by carl craig. tribe were born out of the ashes of a fallen city in the early 70s. after motown, the boom of the car industry & the advances of civil rights in the 1960s, came a decade of governmental abandonment, high unemployment & inner-city violence & urban decay. tribe was a collective brought together to fight these negative forces. in the 7 years they existed, tribe produced seminal albums, published tribe magazine & ran numerous education workshops. this album features the best of the music produced by this legendary detroit collective. "a fascinating document of an overlooked era" - the observer, "not only a joyful listening experience, this is also music making a political act. truly uplifting stuff" - the wire. [soul jazz](#)

souljazz orchestra : rising sun

coming straight outta ottawa, canada, this group is the modern embodiment of soul-jazz afro funk, drawing on the rough raw grooves of the 60s & 70s effortlessly fusing soul, jazz, afro & latin rhythms within their music. indeed they have moved forward the blueprint of fela, fania & the funk in entirely new ways, whilst keeping the vital analogue grit intact. this, their 3rd album, draws on a wider canvas of styles than ever before, touching on spiritual jazz, deep african rhythms & ethiopian modes to make this sound like their best record yet. [strut](#)

absolute ensemble feat. joe zawinul : absolute zawinul

legendary keyboard player joe zawinul was best known as leader of 2 of the best fusion bands of last 4 decades, weather report & the zawinul syndicate. this is the last studio recording he made before he passed away in 2007 & is a superb collaboration with conductor kristjan jarvi's absolute ensemble featuring startling new arrangements of weather report & syndicate compositions. in selecting the music for the cd, zawinul deliberately aimed to keep the music fresh & not include obvious weather report numbers, resulting in 2 memorable & quite different compositions from the band's final years being performed – 'the peasant' & 'ice-pick willy'. also, 3 tracks originally recorded on solo keyboards by zawinul on his groundbreaking 'dialects' album are given more expansive treatment here – 'sultan', 'great empire' & 'peace'. [intuition](#)

matthew shipp: 4d

this revered jazz pianist is renowned for embracing forward-thinking music of various genres, intermingling free-jazz with electronica & hip hop, working with the likes of dj spooky, antipop consortium & el-p along the way. however, this album sees him go back to basics, serving up an hour's worth of piano solos delivered with absolute free-flowing dexterity & technical virtuosity. he likens his approach to that of "peering into the piano as a starship in its relation to psychic space". the end result is a 4th dimensional sonic tapestry that fills space but with precise contours & unpredictable sequences, adding & linking together like audible pieces in a diabolically devised puzzle. *"this music, from the delicate to the pounding, is the generous work of a master musician"* 8/10 – [popmatters](#). [thirsty ear](#)

the last electro-acoustic space jazz ensemble : miles away

there doesn't seem to be a week go by without mention of a madlib-related release, so true to form, here's another! this time he teams up with a crack team of jazz cats to deliver an album of heady jazz-fusion, covering a range of styles in tribute to the greats, from 'shades of phil (for phil ranelin)', to 'derf (for derf reklaw)', or 'the trane & the pharoah (for john coltrane & pharoah sanders)'. it's authentic sounding stuff that is a fitting tribute to the jazz greats it goes out to. [stones throw](#)

dirty dozen brass band : my feet can't fail me now

(reissue) originally released 25 years ago, now re-mastered, this is the dirty dozen brass band in its prime, when they successfully mixed together r&b with the instrumentation of a new orleans brass band. featuring kirk joseph on sousaphone playing with the agility of an electric bassist, the group revitalized the brass band tradition, opening up the repertoire & inspiring some younger groups to imitate its boldness. 'my feet can't fail me now' is a rollicking, infectious set that captures the spirit of classic new orleans r&b & jazz because it isn't enslaved to those traditions. the group is willing to play around & have fun, adding different rock, pop & r&b influences to their sound. the result is a wonderful, unpredictable album that is as wild & rich as new orleans itself. [evangeline](#)

country

george jones : the great lost hits

(2cd) many consider george jones to be the greatest singer in country music history, yet a number of his best-loved recordings have never been available on cd due to legal reasons. finally though, these classics get to see the light of day. the productions are simple & to the point – a voice like george's needs no more ornamentation than it has here. includes 'a good year for the roses', 'walk through this world with me', 'i'll share my world with you' & 'when the grass grows over me', as well as the original version of 'beneath still waters' (later a hit for emmylou harris) & 'your angel steps out of heaven' (later recorded by elvis costello, flying burrito brothers & others). there is no doubt that jones helped set the standard for modern country music. [time life](#)

folk

kris drever : mark the hard earth

2nd solo effort from the orcadian folk guitarist & one third of award-winning scottish trio, lau. with appearances from a variety of folk/traditional instrumentalists scattered throughout its 11 tracks – from the somewhat legendary phil cunningham on squeeze box & frequent collaborator john mccusker on fiddle duties, to the some truly magical backing vocals from singers heidi talbot & karine polwart – this is an assured record centred largely around traditional scottish folk. on the other hand, tracks like the lulling 'crown of london' & the standout 'allegory' with its flecks of darkness & marching rhythms, take the listener on intriguing detours along the way. *"quite understated & beautifully played, drever's singing peerless throughout"* – [bbc](#). [navigator](#)

ashley hutchings & ken nicol : copper, russet & gold

the careers of british folk rock legends, steeleye span, have often been compared to a bus ride with members getting on & off along the way. if that is the case, then ashley hutchings & ken nicol have ridden at both ends of the journey. it was ashley that helped form the band 40 years ago, while comparatively ken is very much part of the band's future, having joined them in 2002. this record sees the duo delve into their rich musical history. the expected folk feel is certainly there but also mixed with splashes of jazz, blues & rock. lyrically too the record is a varied experience with tales of old england, the misery of supporting a doomed football team, sir francis drake & the beauty of paris. this is a record that glows with warmth, character & charm. [park](#)

jason steel : fire begot ash

jason steel is a guitarist & singer hailing from south yorkshire, now firmly settled in north london. in 2008 he joined the ranks of the owl service & their "midwich collective" & now, following 3 critically acclaimed ep releases, rif mountain bring you his debut long player. drawing on the lineage of skip james & elizabeth cotton, through jackson c frank, to bert & john, exuding qualities that these days seem as rare as hen's teeth, the result is an album of compelling, affecting music. *"with the cautious, unhurried pace of a fahey disciple, on a brace of rags his picking trickles easily like an appalachian mountain stream. meanwhile, across an array of original songs – & an absolutely stunning 'false bride' - his soft voice lulls seductively. it's a gracious, stately debut"* – [r2 mag](#). [rif mountain](#)

world

sa dingding : harmony

nobody, it is safe to say, expresses things quite like sa dingding, the 26-year-old star of chinese electronica, who became one of the east's most in-demand singers after the release of her debut album at the start of 2008. with her 2nd album, she delves deeper into the folk & traditional music of south-western china in search of universal emotions & ways of expression, aided by the talents of marius de vries (rufus wainwright, madonna, elbow) & the mixing skills of paul oakenfold. born in the chinese region of inner mongolia in 1983, dingding grew up a nomad, travelling around eastern china with her family until they arrived in beijing in 2000. she has been seen as a voice from the heart of contemporary china, representative of both china's 21st-century future & its rural past. 'harmony' an upbeat & cheerful offering, leaning towards pop & dance. *"if people found calm from 'alive', i hope they find joy & happiness from 'harmony'"* - sa dingding. *"yoko ono would be proud, sounds like the next bond theme"* 4/5 - [majo](#). [wrasse](#)

v/a : nigeria special volume 2

(cd / 2lp) sadly this is the final volume of the absolutely essential 'nigeria special' series. as ever, the tracks selected here by african music obsessive miles claret have been long forgotten & out of print for 35 years – the fruits of an arduous labour that has taken over 10 years of dedication & research, documenting nigeria's forgotten musical history. the range of styles vary from highlife to juju & nigerian blues. with a peppering of afro experimentation, the same musical stew pervades vol. 2 as it's predecessor & the emphasis continues to focus on the laid back & mid tempo feel found on vol. 1. the bluesy guitar band style of the otarus & the peacocks sits opposite the more uptempo sound of highlife legends stephen osita osadebe & paulson kalu. progressive outfits the black zenith, the don isaac ezekiel combination & joy nwoso remind us that these were experimental times with their fusions of jazz & highlife. a fitting end to an indispensable series. "a deep selection that yields more with each listen, this is recommended for aficionados & passing fans alike" - songlines. [soundway](#)

v/a : afro rock vol. 1

(reissue) 'afro rock vol. 1' is one of the most important compilations of heavy original 70's afro funk & soul to be released in recent years. originally surfacing on duncan brooker's indie kona label in early 2001, the album single-handedly kick-started the thirst among jazz, funk & soul fans & "diggers" to rediscover lost music from africa made during the 60s & 70s, from a time when many countries were gaining independence & celebrating a pan-african identity within their music. the album is testament to the determined work of brooker following several research trips, especially to east africa – kenya & zaire. it brought to light east africa's finest funk band, air fiesta matata, led by the recently deceased steele beattttah, 'the nigerian james brown' geraldo pino from port harcourt in nigeria & the storming afro jam 'yuda' by dackin dackino, a previously unreleased gem from zaire, discovered on a discarded reel. out of print since 2002, the influential album is reissued in its original form with an extra bonus track, a dynamite unreleased psychedelic cut by kenya's ishmael jingo. [strut](#)

s o u n d t r a c k s

billy green : stone ost

(cd / lp) finders keepers continue to dig for those obscure records that others have given up looking for & this time they have unearthed a bizarre soundtrack of electronic swamp-rock from a 1974 ozploitation biker-psych cult classic. the film predates mad max by a few years & is, in all respects, that film's hairier, wiggered out older sibling. as soon as the needle drops it belches out a freakish mix of didgeridoo & moog blended with unidentified clicks & pops - it is literally impossible to put a date, never mind a storyline, to this acid fuelled soundscape. eventually the music evolves into swampy psych-funk-rock & you are treated to 45 minutes of skewed, forward-thinking avant-pop that would stylistically fill a very lonely section in the record shop racks. truly a one off & yet another feather in this fine label's cap. [finders keepers](#)

v/a : micmacs ost

'micmacs' is the highly acclaimed new flick from jean pierre jeunet (director of 'amelie'), the soundtrack was composed by young musician raphael beau. his compositions perfectly fit the quirky & poetic world of the main character, bazil, mirroring his emotional state & troubles he goes through. the music here echoes classic film scores from the 40s & 50s, indeed elements of legendary film composer max steiner's music ('king kong', 'gone with the wind', 'casablanca') are blended with beau's oddball sound effects & creaking squeeze boxes to create something wonderfully strange & fun. [milan](#)

v i n y l

sam mcloughlin & alison cooper : natural lancashire / supernatural lancashire

(limited to 500) the final part in finders keepers' indispensable (!) disposable music series explores the landscape that stretches from windermere in the north, to liverpool in the west & manchester in the east. on the first side 'natural lancashire,' there are 12 tracks that explore the natural history of the old county of lancashire & they are beautifully reminiscent of edward williams' groundbreaking work on 'life on earth'. on the flip things are altogether more spectral. the term hauntology gets bandied about a fair bit but these 11 tracks are surely deserving of the term. they occupy the space somewhere between the spooked folk of the 'wickerman' soundtrack & broadcast's more bucolic moments. once again finders keepers have come up trumps. [finders keepers](#)

pelican : what we all come to need

(2lp with bonus tracks & tip-on gatefold sleeve) the 4th album from the mighty chicago instrumental metal outfit finds the band shifting gears once again. 'what we all come to need' is pelican through & through & the apex of their creative aspirations. it is the album that straddles most confidently the fine line between adherence to roots & the mining of the unexplored. as punishing as it is calming, this is pelican at their most inspired & sonically adept, delivering 50 minutes of weighty riffs & textured progressions in the momentous succession. this isn't maturation as much as it is confidence & purpose & the latter are stamped on every note. guest performances on the record include greg anderson (sunn0))), aaron turner (isis), allen epley (shiner, life & times) & ben verellen (helms alee). [southern lord](#)

archie bronson outfit : coconut (lp + dvd + download code) [domino](#)

v/a : nigeria afrobeat special - the new explosive sound in 1970's nigeria (3lp) [soundway](#)

d v d

al jarnow : celestial navigations – the short films of al jarnow

the numero group have long been the champions of obscure soul, funk & folk records released up & down the u.s. of a. & have recently been going a little more multimedia with books & the like. now they turn their attentions to the moving image & to one man in particular: al jarnow. jarnow's filmmaking career kicked off at sesame street where his shorts were interspersed amongst the hi-jinx of big bird & co. he coupled time-lapse, stop motion & cel animation with simple objects found in every day life & with these simple tools, deconstructed the world for an entire generation. this 1st collection of his work compiles 45 individual restored films & is lovingly packaged with a 60 page full colour book & 30 minute documentary. it is spellbinding & bursting with imagination & altogether fantastic stuff. [the numero group](#)

jimi hendrix : live at woodstock

(2dvd) this undoubtedly stands as one of jimi's most celebrated performances. features all of the existing footage from the festival including 'foxy lady', 'purple haze', 'hey joe', 'spanish castle magic', 'lover man' & more, plus a documentary about the festival & interviews with all the musicians involved. [sony](#)

singles

single of the week

gaggle : i hear flies

(7") debut single from the 20 strong all female choir gaggle. led by deborah coughlin, the girls unleash chaotic chants of "i'm a drunk" over dark, dubby industrial-strength beats. it's an original, raucous, chaotic noise which is irresistible & a whole lot of fun. "the most exciting, innovative & genuinely imaginative force at large in music right now" - nme. [transgressive](#)

tindersticks : black smoke/just drifting

(ultra limited 7") from their recent 'falling down a mountain' album, 'black smoke' finds the tindersticks slipping themselves into a rocking groove, complete with vintage-styled production & lots of tambourine. the b-side offers up a beautiful stripped down cover of psychic tv's 'just drifting'. [lucky dog](#)

veronica falls : found love in a graveyard

(v. limited 7" - uk release) veronica falls sit somewhere between the pains of being pure at heart's euphoric pop hooks & crystal stilt's darker, moody introspections. they are armed with duelling boy-girl vocals & jangling guitars & are creating utterly captivating dreamy indie-pop with bleak undercurrents. [trouble](#)

fanfarlo : harold t. wilkins, or how to wait for a very long time

(7") new single taken from shop faves fanfarlo's debut album. musically fanfarlo go far beyond their roots in sufjan stevens, beirut & arcade fire to deliver a new strand of universal pop music, as evidenced here. b-side is a live session version of 'comments'. [atlantic](#)

broken bells : the high road

(v. limited 7") 1st single from the collaborative hook-up between the shins frontman james mercer & uber-cool producer dangermouse. big vocal harmonies, lilting acoustic guitar topped with a toytown melodica, a glorious slice of alt-psych-pop! [columbia](#)

peepholes : lair ep

(limited 12") this power chaos garage duo have grown into a new kind of monster - put coachwhips' metronomic sister howling from the eye of the hurricane together with a skeletal organist at the peak of his frenzy, hurling gothic lightning bolts from the tabernacle of the church of dagon & you have a vortex which is a blur which is the mystic kick that katia & nick deliver. remixes from e*rock & weird e.moline as performed by eyes. recommended! [hungry for power](#)

jimi hendrix : bleeding heart

(v. limited 7") taken from the unreleased studio album 'valley of neptune' this is jimi hendrix's cover of the classic song by elmore james. originally recorded in 1969, this studio recording featuring jimi, billy cox & drummer rocky isaac, has never been released until now! the b side is a previously unreleased non-album track & is quite simply 7 minutes of pure guitar genius. [sony](#)

laura gibson : spirited

(7") this cat-sitting folkstress from an isolated logging town in oregon has worked with laura veirs, the dodos & norfolk & western. 'spirited' is a beautiful song, all gently plucked acoustic guitars & pianos with shimmering cymbal washes. for fans of jolie holland & alela diane. [souterrain transmissions](#)

cymbals eat guitars : wind phoenix

(7") 3rd single taken from their album 'why there are mountains'. 'wind phoenix' showcases the band's ability to pair chaotic yelps & sinuous riffs with pounding drums alongside melodic bass lines & lush orchestral layers. features an exclusive cover of elliot smith's 'ballad of big nothing' on the other side. [memphis industries](#)

bombay bicycle club : evening/morning

(very limited 7", comes in handmade, numbered sleeve) 'evening/morning' is an urgent, literate slice of indie rock with a razor-wire production & some endearing hooks. singer jack steadman might sound like he's constantly about to burst into tears at any moment but the buzz-saw bass & angular guitars help keep the bands masculinity in check. [island](#)

teenagersintokyo : peter pan

(7") nice slice of dark disco pop from teenagersintokyo. 'peter pan' is a brooding affair with a big chorus, aimed straight at the indie dancefloor. well worth checking the sparse, ghostly remix by the horrors on the flip. [backyard](#)

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