

**JUICE NOTHING PRESENTS**  
**THE 250 BEST**  
**ALBUMS OF THE**  
**DECADE**  
**(2010-2019)**



**BY JARED WOODS**

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Reviews written by Jared Woods

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO  
**MOLLY SEA**

# WTF HELLO!

*After listening to well over 4,000 albums from 2010 until 2019 while compiling a top 50 for each year, Jared Woods has become the educated voice that you can trust. Go ahead and read his book. Study his words. Steal his best suggestions. And, before you know it, you too can sound like a high authority on this decade of music. Your friends will be so impressed.*

*Old people like to say that music isn't what it used to be, which may or may not be true. However, it is the abundance of modern material which can often create the daunting shell which prevents listeners from doing the necessary digging. Is this you? Never fear! For there are those of us who are willing to put in the necessary effort which you are not. We are the chosen ones. And allow us gleefully inform you that, yes, this was yet another fantastic decade of music. And by "us", I mean "me", obviously.*

*Humans can never predict how a decade will fair in the greater scheme of the musical history books. All it takes is one sleeper hit to utterly redefine the set period, overlooked in its time yet massively influential in hindsight,*

realigning the shape of all things to come. Such hypothetical gemstones remain out of our reach for now, but this does not mean that we are unable to observe some of the landscape's bigger pictures. We are still capable of pinpointing specific albums and stylistic evolutions which sprouted higher than the weeds, and we can nod in their general direction with a certain approval, saying hello to those plants which shall surely be remembered for a long time after we are gone. Or not, whatever, I dunno.

From my perspective, the most interesting observation I made this decade was where the majority of genres appeared to split down the middle, making progressions in two very contradictory directions: the dumbed-down superficial incarnations vs. the more mature weigh-ins with far heftier substance to boast, verifying our human nature of perpetually venturing towards the extremes whichever way that may be. Perhaps these movements were a long time developing, but never before have we heard such a formulated lack of intelligence coming from our television sets while there was always a counter line running away from these ideals, incorporating artistic flairs and prefixing their various labels with words such as "contemporary" or "alternative" or "experimental" to further the distance.

Hip hop was a key player in this ethos, offering a myriad of hybrid genre-bendings to cater to the art students while the traps and the mumbles offered the more casual listeners something to mindlessly dribble over. R&B was another impressive focal point of the decade, standing as perhaps the greatest example of where more creative (oft-soulful) expressions could gently brush fingertips with the commercial world. Various teen pop stars made the mid-decade transition into more sophisticated and/or abrasive regions while EDM only banged harder and IDM outsmarted itself until nobody could understand it anymore. Meanwhile, the oversized umbrella term of rock was about as immovable as the name would suggest, with

perhaps a little additional spice sprinkled upon the resurgence of post-punk and the refining of the already well-defined blackgaze genre.

But these are hardly fresh entries, right? Rather, they were steps along pathways set in motions long before 2010 even rolled about. Is there anything about this decade which stands truly unique? Grime's evolution, perhaps? Vaporwave came and went pretty quick. Hey, remember when Dubstep conquered the world for a short period back there? No, I think what made this decade truly stand out was its drive for survival. This can be applied in terms of the now completely transformed industry models where record labels were becoming less imperative and the streaming platform were impacting finances, forcing artists to become smarter about their marketing ploys. But playing for even higher survival stakes, was our current political climate which affected the world as a whole, our art quick to follow. The voices of the audio medium shouted to be heard with plenty of **Black Lives Matter** themed records coming to the forefront while the female gender finally rose (or, perhaps, were finally granted the space to rise) as a driving force behind some of the year's biggest projects. And yet, the most unprecedented offering from the 2010s' cultural environment was the surge of LGBT (emphasis on transgender) electronics, most notably the very specific industrial vein for some reason. Honestly, if there was any genre-branch that could have only existed in the last 10 years, this would be the one that blasted the loudest.

With that in mind, the 250 entries that you are about to witness are what I consider to be the most exciting highlights that one can use to map out what made this decade so distinguishable. These albums were chosen not only in terms of personal opinion, critical acclaim, public reaction, charting ability, general talent, and uniqueness, but above all else, for how long they stuck in my mind after the record had stopped spinning. Because what else really matters? Nothing matters. You will be dead soon.

*This is the official  
Best of the Decade list.  
Every other list is  
fake and wrong.*





**End of Year Lists**

*#14 Juice Nothing*

**14 May 2014**  
**Alt-Country Rock**  
**Produced by Devin Townsend**  
**Label: HevyDevy**  
**73:47**

The more revered half of the Casualties duo, Devin Townsend, described this atmospheric record as a “haunted Johnny Cash”, then elaborated on a tale which tells of a space traveller who is lured onto a planet which feeds on fear! But, thankfully, this hero eventually finds peace in an old radio which sounds... overindulgent? No? Ok well, how about the ambient waffie then, with almost one hour and 15 minutes of relatively monotonous ideas, far from what any critic would consider a “perfect record”. But it’s definitely different! Owed massively in part to

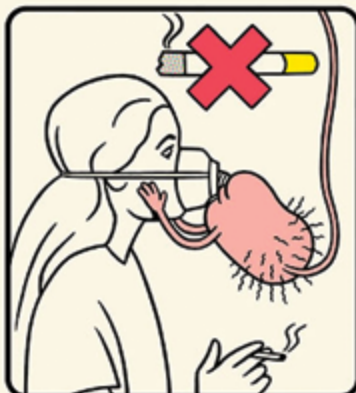
the project’s other half, Ché Dorval, and her multi-layered vocals which smooth over the country creepshow by scooping you up with love then gently placing you back down, lulling you into a premature slumber. And, sometimes, a little snooze is all we need.

**“Suffice it to say, this a record which you should hear as soon as you possibly can. It further establishes Devin Townsend as one of today’s most accomplished, and ingenious, musicians.”**

**— Sputnikmusic**

# FUTURE OF THE LEFT

HOW TO STOP YOUR BRAIN IN AN ACCIDENT



# 249



**FUTURE OF THE LEFT**  
**HOW TO STOP YOUR BRAIN IN AN ACCIDENT**

## End of Year Lists

#10 Drowned in Sound | #14 The Needle Drop | #23 Sputnikmusic  
#45 FasterLouder | #45 NME | #66 musicOMH | #67 Crack  
Magazine | #39 Juice Nothing

**21 October 2013**  
**Post-Hardcore Noise Rock**  
**Produced by Future of the Left**  
**Label: Prescriptions**  
**44:58**

Storming in like some staunchly drunk yet fiercely intelligent clown, this album is having a laugh at your expense whilst willing to smash your face in. Just read the song titles, they say a lot by themselves. And yet with all the absurd comedies and mischievous imagination, there's still an educated social commentary behind the curtain, dead serious about not being serious or being dead or allowing any quirky song in their rugged arsenal put a single foot wrong. Make no mistake, Future of the Left have all the right talents in all the right places to compose

a catchy, digestible radio-hit album if they so wanted to. They just don't want to.

***“Biting, poetic and awkward, this is music with brains to match its brawn.”***

**— Kerrang!**



INTERFERENCE—CHORUS—UNEQUAL  
MORNING SUN—LOCKER LEAK  
AN EXIT—LONELY AT THE TOP—DAO  
HOME—NEW WAYS TO LOVE

**248**

**HOLLY HERNDON  
PLATFORM**

PLATFORM  
HOLLY HERNDON

### End of Year Lists

#1 The Vinyl Factory | #2 Bleep | #3 Crack Magazine | #6 The Wire  
#7 Dummy | #10 Dazed | #10 The Quietus | #20 Clash | #20 Loud  
and Quiet | #20 Uncut | #29 Juice Nothing

**18 May 2015**

**Glitch Pop**

**Produced by Holly Herndon**

**Label: 4AD**

**49:36**

*Platform can come off a little try-hardy, as cut-up noises fragment all over the place, working as some sort of unstructured sound collage rather than “music”, serving only to please their pretentious ADHD-riddled creator presumably whacked out on amphetamines. Such randomly scrambled tightly-packed packages certainly run the risk of overbearing the listener, but... perhaps you are unusual enough to match the challenge? If so, hold your breath and brace yourself against the experimental bursts of blinding chrome, driven by layers of Holly’s*

*vocals shattered into snippets then built up towards the soundscape of a very disjointed future. Everything is clinically clean here, yet deliriously stressful, like a robotic doctor with beautiful mechanics accidentally slicing an artery even though it was only trying to help.*

***“Platform is not a manifesto, but it feels like a galvanising challenge to Herndon’s peers to embolden their ideas, broaden their horizons and push on into an undiscovered continent of sound.”***

**— Uncut**

# FUTURE ISLANDS SINGLES



# 247

## FUTURE ISLANDS SINGLES

### End of Year Lists

#3 Under the Radar | #4 Time Out New York | #7 SPIN | #8 MAGNET  
#8 musicOMH | #9 Q Magazine | #10 The Telegraph | #11 BBC  
Radio 6 Music | #11 NME | #12 Gigwise

**25 March 2014**

**Synthpop**

**Produced by Chris Coady**

**Label: 4AD**

**42:11**

*And the award for the most misleading yet cleverly titled marketing ploy goes to... well, you know. Regardless, like some self-fulfilling prophecy, this record may as well have been a best-of compilation as it coincidentally features a collection of Future Island's greatest works, every song taking its playfulness so seriously that the overall intended mood is not easily identifiable. The end of the decade came, and with that, the impossibility of shaking this piece as being an unassuming (oft-overlooked) indie-pop treasure, providing undeniable evidence that*

*an album doesn't have to be brilliantly groundbreaking to make the grade. An unwavering series of dainty smiles can do the trick too.*

***“Singles is an effortless wonder. Each and every track runs its course avoiding any pitfalls.”***

***— The Line of Best Fit***





## End of Year Lists

#13 *The Needle Drop* | #18 *Tiny Mix Tapes* | #29 *Gorilla vs. Bear*  
#34 *Clash*

**21 October 2016**

**Electropop**

**Produced by Gus Lobban and Jamie Buller**

**Label: Double Denim | Sony**

**36:28**

The greatest illusion Kero Kero Bonito ever pulled was their easy-stick pop simplicity which could only be misconstrued as a childlike naivety. Rest assured, they designed it that way. The adorable party draws a cartoon heart exploding from blind excitement, illustrating topics that the whole family can relate to before pouring bags of sugar into your pockets then sending you speeding off with a smile stuck on your face. All very calculated. And while the sudden language jumps between Japanese and English may leave some listeners a touch lost,

don't forget you still have all that sugar in your pockets! Chew it up like bubblegum then become one with the machine.

***“It’s an album crammed full of massive singles; the musical equivalent of a table full of gaudy, delicious cupcakes. You know too much of it is probably bad for you, but you can’t help diving in and sampling each and every one with relish.”***

**— The 405**



**245**

**GIRL BAND**  
**THE TALKIES**

**GIRL BAND**

**The Talkies**

**End of Year Lists**

*#39 Drift | #95 Rough Trade | #27 Juice Nothing*

**27 September 2019**  
**Experimental Post-Punk Noise Rock**  
**Produced by Daniel Fox**  
**Label: Rough Trade**  
**44:39**

There are two branches one can take when reviewing the likes of *The Talkies*. There are those who insist on comparing the record to *Daughters'* seminal album which dropped the year before, and there are those who dismiss the association as lazy journalism. But, in the end, it doesn't matter which side of the fence you are on, because both sides are still talking about *Daughters*, right? And, truthfully, who cares? Everyone who's experienced *You Won't Get What You Want* was forced to adapt accordingly or die, and *Girl Talk* will always be remembered as the

first band to follow these steps so perfectly. Do not get the seemingly copycat manoeuvre confused, as this specific style of noise is only finding its wings now and we are looking at a very intense next-decade of rabies coming right up. It's gonna be awesome.

***“The Talkies is rough around the edges, is of a debased, primal nature, yet is incredibly on-point with the unsettling atmosphere it communicates. Girl Band is officially the crown jewel of Irish punk, if a beautifully horrific crown jewel.”***

**— The 405**

**Gerard Way**

**Hesitant Alien**



**End of Year Lists**

*#39 Grantland | #19 Juice Nothing*

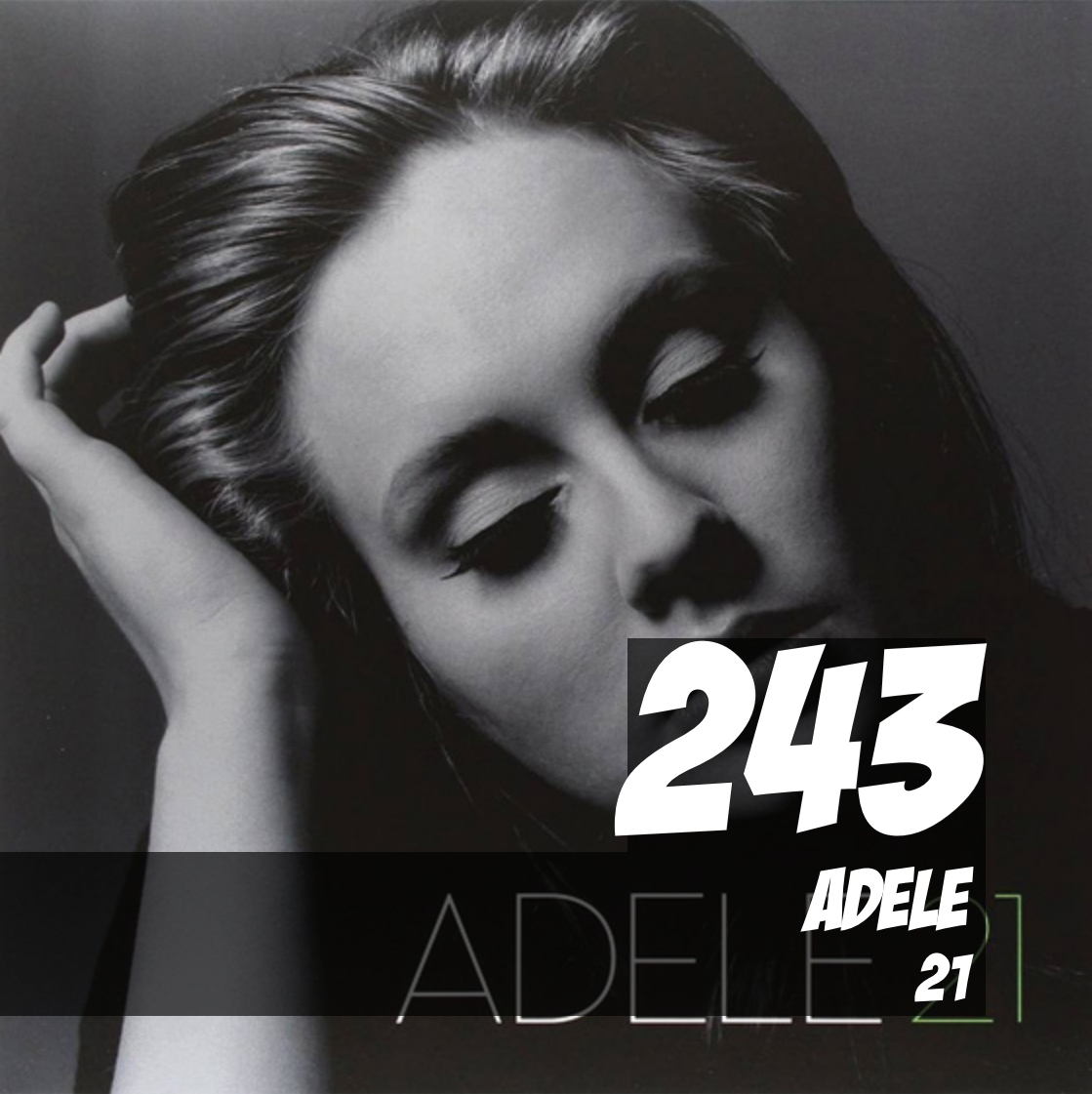
**30 September 2014**  
**Indie Noise Pop Rock**  
**Produced by Doug McKean**  
**Label: Warner Bros. | Reprise**  
**38:51**

My Chemical Romance were undoubtedly the noughties poster NME gateway drug for young teenage girls to discover emo-punk, hence why many critics didn't have the highest of hopes for the lead singer's first foray into the world of solo records. Thankfully, Gerard knew what was at stake and opted to distance himself from former glories, rather presenting a project which preserves that same catchy pop fused within alternative energy, but also pattered the contents with a more glammy interest, fuzzed-out of focus as a matter of urgency from

an artist with something to prove. And it's solid, the perfect meeting point between sticking to what works whilst refusing to remain the same, working to shove the man's legacy even deeper into the cement.

***“Hesitant Alien is a magnificently oddly-shaped album that glides and jerks between styles like a turbo-charged rubber ball.”***

**— Kerrang!**



**243**

**ADELE**  
**21**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Amazon | #1 Billboard | #1 Rolling Stone | #1 TIME | #2 Bigger Than The Sound | #3 American Songwriter | #3 Q Magazine | #6 FILTER | #6 Pazz and Jop | #6 Spinner | #8 Clash | #10 DIY | #12 PopMatters | #14 Paste | #25 A.V. Club | #33 Juice Nothing

**24 January 2011**

**Pop Soul**

**Produced by Rick Rubin | Paul Epworth | Ryan Tedder,**

**Label: XL | Columbia**

**48:12**

Sometimes it's easier to use facts to stack an undeniable case on top of your opinion, even if these facts might ultimately crumble your own argument. Like how 21 sold more copies than any other album in 2011 and 2012. Or how it's the most certified album ever (400 globally). Or how, at 31 million copies shipped, it's in the top 20 best selling albums of all time. And how this was achieved without nudity or dancey music videos or cheap controversy. It was achieved with Adele's raspy vocals which blasted her soul right from her throat with such a power

that the entire world was flattened by the superstar juggernaut she is. This position may not be the biggest on this list, but this record still the BIGGEST on this list, y'know what I mean?

***“Hearing a voice that grows scratchy and threatens to break and has not been tampered with, has not been slicked over in a studio, a voice that reveals all that can be found within a person and also seems to hold something back, to suggest another truth just behind the veil.”***

**— Sputnikmusic**





**242**

**KIM PETRAS**  
**TURN OFF THE LIGHT**

End of Year Lists

*#26 Juice Nothing*

**1 October 2019**  
**Electro Dance Synthpop**  
**Produced by Made in China**  
**Label: BunHead**  
**48:58**

When discussing this record it's difficult to not fall into the swamp of irrelevant details. For starters, Kim was once one of the youngest people to undergo a gender transition and this fact follows her like a GLAAD tattoo of approval. But even more curious to this point was her choice to work exclusively with Dr Luke, a man whose reputation has been anything but an ally to sexual equality in recent years. These conversations are important but we should not allow them to detract from the following musical accomplishment: Petras and co. have successfully

recorded a Halloween dance album! Such a specific theme would be much easier to get wrong than right yet the shameless Jespen-XCX-Gaga mimicry is delivered with a horror flavour so sexy and unique that it often outshines its victims. Equal parts trick and treat, just listen.

**“Petras lets each song build like the dread that follows a tense tracking shot of a slasher-film chase. Somehow, she’s managed to exorcise the spirit of Halloween out of her sharp brand of funky pop music.”**

**— MTV News**

CAR BOMB



End of Year Lists

*#25 Juice Nothing*

**27 September 2019**

**Mathcore Djent**

**Produced by Greg Kubacki**

**Label: Holy Roar Records**

**45:00**

*Car Bomb* betray no signs of embarrassment as they go about their unrestrained djenty ways, ripping off just about everyone under the alternative metal sun. But what they lack in genre imagination, they more than make up for with their inventive approach to tired sounds, never lifting their foot off of the go-pedal and flexing their mathy talents—not via means of pretentious time signatures, mind you, but with nonstop changes, perpetually swerving off in erratic directions then colliding headfirst into tones from way over there. The

hard work is all exposed for anyone witness with one of the tightest of messes you're likely to get beaten up with this decade.

***“The record is a devastating show of death metal-leaning mathcore. Few bands have quite as violent a sound as *Car Bomb*, and *Mordial* is another finely crafted album to tack on their discography.”***

**— Exclaim!**



**240**

**SUNSET NETWORK 91**  
**STRANGERS ONCE LOVERS**

**End of Year Lists**

*#17 Juice Nothing*

**3 January 2016**

**Vaporwave**

**Produced by Sunset Network 91**

**Label: DMT | Fantasy Deluxe**

**65:27**

Vaporwave is one of the only true new genres to come out of the 2010s. Late-80s/early-90s retro culture was harvested then warped into euphoric atmospheres, recruiting an array of cult followers by exploiting their nostalgia moments before the entire musical style kinda just... vanished? But before it did, an army of artists saturated the scene, with *Strangers Once Lovers* standing as surely one of the most discussed. The album places you in the seediest of motels, complete with neon signs and paper-thin walls, where your neighbour has fallen asleep with

his television set on and your room reverberates from the soundtrack of some sleazy late-night phonesex commercial. If nothing else, it's a perverted reminder of how far away from home you are.

**“An outstanding example of the quantum melody rescue that comes out of making a universe where these 33 sample sources all co-exist under the same rendering bitrate and curational intent.”**

**— Vito\_James, Rate Your Music**



PARENTAL  
ADVISORY  
EXPLICIT CONTENT

## End of Year Lists

*#20 The Guardian | #44 Obscure Sound | #17 Juice Nothing*

**23 July 2012**

**Political UK Hardcore Conscious Hip Hop**

**Produced by Al Shux**

**Label: Warner Bros.**

**46:11**

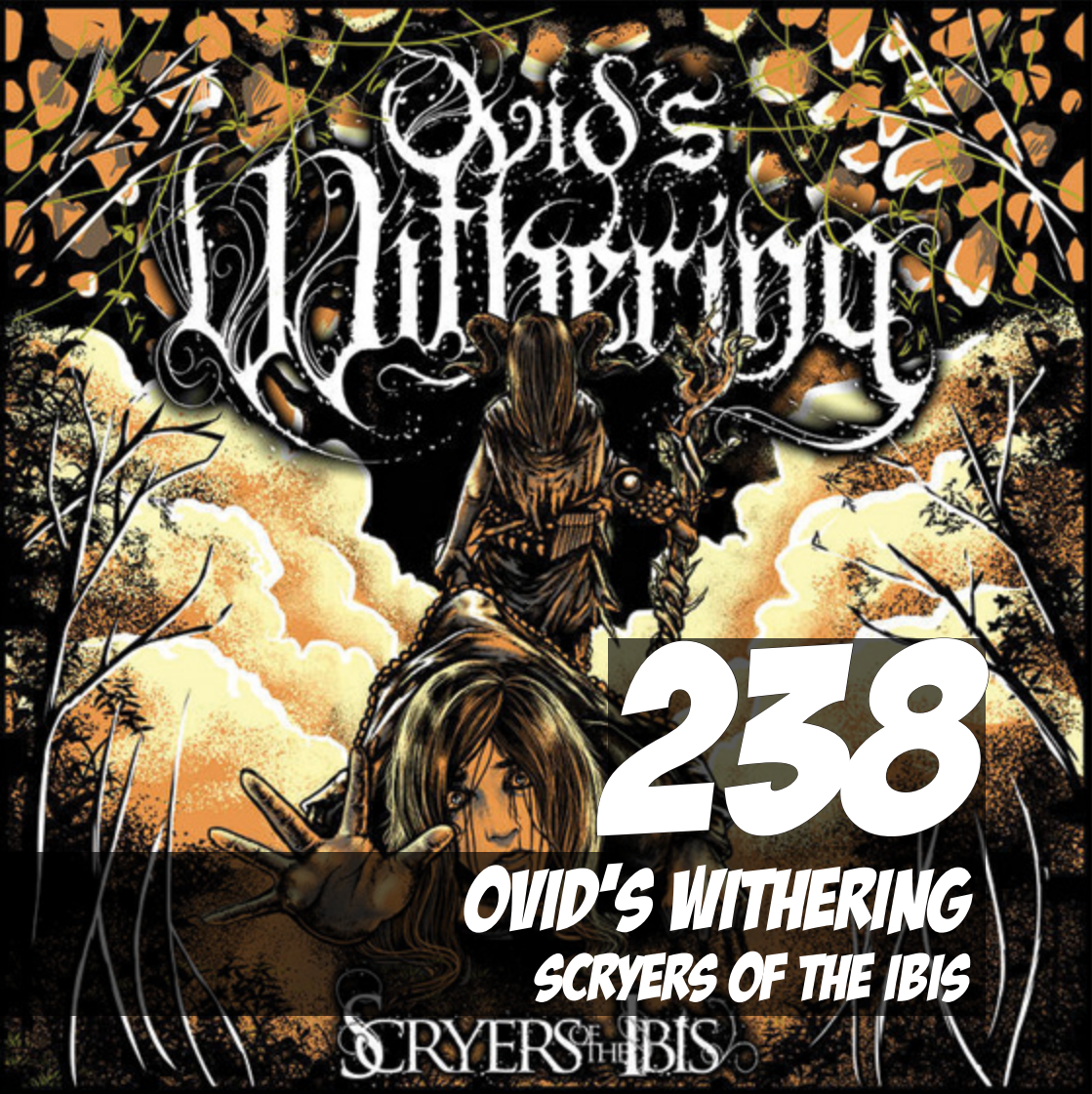
Despite his past successes, this album proves that Ben Drew still has a lot more to say as one of the hardest working dudes in the decade's early hip hop game. This release not only stands as his greatest achievement but also couples as the soundtrack to the (very good!) film of the same name—a film which Drew wrote and directed himself. But even without the accompanying visuals, this album's narrative keeps you on the edge-of-your-seat just like a movie would, eerily reflecting the confrontational 2011 London riots by oozing out fed-up protests from the

dark lower-class side of first-world life. And this felt more relevant than anything else available at the time.

**“Solid, purposeful, and crafted in a manner that betrays both Drew’s age and the album’s hurried road to release, *Ill Manors* makes heavy-hitter number three for the rapper, suggesting that *Plan B* doesn’t issue albums, just milestones.”**

**— AllMusic**





End of Year Lists

*#17 Juice Nothing*

**13 November 2013**

**Deathcore Djent**

**Produced by Ovid's Withering**

**Label: Unique Leader**

**72:41**

Ovid's *Withering* signature weapon is "moments". It doesn't matter which song is under fire, you're sure to hit roughly any 3-minute mark when everything makes a turn for the weird. Whether it falls into stress-provoking background noises or a technical detail of evil smashes through your attention, they appear to be on a mission to sweep every corner of the heaviest genres just show off their talents. A thirsty display of desperation if there ever was one, exploding each stitch in hopes of forging a debut album which would impress even the

devil himself. And what's more, they succeeded! It's a pity then that this still remains as the group's only testament due to lost members amidst sexual misconduct allegations... but let's focus on the good times rather.

**"With very limited weaknesses Ovid's *Withering* prove themselves a very capable unit who show a lot of maturity for a band whom just released their first full length."**

**— Sputnikmusic**

# THE BODY



# 237

**THE BODY**

**NO ONE DESERVES HAPPINESS**

## End of Year Lists

#12 *FACT* | #23 *Consequence of Sound* | #41 *Treble* | #49 *The Vinyl Factory* | #62 *The Quietus* | #47 *Juice Nothing*

**18 March 2016**

**Drone Metal**

**Produced by The Body**

**Label: Thrill Jockey**

**47:47**

Reportedly, *No One Deserves Happiness* was The Body's attempt at creating the "grossest pop album ever made". Erm, the pop aspect might be hard to come by, but the gross is clearly represented! For here is a hopelessly frightening record which might even be considered "insufferable" if it wasn't for the thankful inclusion of paradoxical female vocals, haunting with grace, calmly reminding you that all is not lost, there is beauty in this world after all, even if the more predominant inhuman screams of banality indicate something different. Congratulations

to The Body for locating the oft-desired agony-meets-elegance formula which so many bands have failed at achieving before, except this is genuinely spawned from the most unclean of orders, contaminated by an excessive amount of horrible feelings which slaughter you slowly as easily one the most unnerving records featured in this book.

***"No matter how harrowing King's cries become, how punitive the increasingly industrial percussion grows, or how profound the agony of the textured sound becomes, it's these little moments of silvery beauty that make No One Deserves Happiness transcendent and unbearable. Settle in and endure."***

**— Exclaim!**



**236**

***BLACK DRESSES  
THANK YOU***

**End of Year Lists**

*#24 Juice Nothing*

**5 February 2019**  
**Electro-Industrial**  
**Produced by Black Dresses**  
**Label: N/A**  
**36:55**

As the transgender community continues to locate untapped artistic styles to best represent their own place in the modern world, *Black Dresses* have discovered an interesting balance within their gender identities. Somewhere in amongst this distorted mess is a cute femininity torn down the middle by aggressive screams of testosterone, an inescapably loud clipping nightmare with ear-bleeding production, aggressively attacking life itself wielding nothing but a terrifying momentum of pop and a passionate fistful of hatred. The

duo have had a busy end-of-decade as they've explored their sound (releasing three records in two years) and while this offering is not always lauded as their best work, it's certainly my favourite, and I wrote this book, so whatever, thank you!

**“Thank You provides an brilliantly realised, anarchic and cathartic ride.”**

**— Pastel Waste Land**



**235**

**TAYLOR SWIFT**

**1989**

T.S.

1989

## End of Year Lists

#1 Billboard | #1 Cosmopolitan | #2 Digital Spy | #3 Drowned in Sound | #4 American Songwriter | #4 TIME | #5 The Telegraph | #7 Pazz & Jop | #8 Complex | #10 Rolling Stone | #12 The Guardian | #15 A.V. Club | #15 PopMatters | #15 Time Out London

**27 October 2014**  
**Electro Synthpop**  
**Produced by Max Martin**  
**Label: Big Machine**  
**48:41**

Regardless of critical acclaim or predicted shelf life, this decade was Taylor Swift's baby and Taylor Swift's baby alone. Out-selling everyone with an army of hooky records, there did seem to be something particularly noteworthy about her 1989 effort, a place where her commercial intellect somehow soothed even the most pretentious of hipster keyboard warriors, everyone agreeing that Swift had spilt her guts in a particularly well-polished fashion this time. She was still spitting from vengeance towards past lovers but she had found a new

pointy platform of pure pop catharsis to complain, reaching out to a much wider audience which is exactly the type of thing that happen once you've sold your soul to the Illuminati.

***“1989, in its perfect evocation of our hugest, most teenage feelings, isn't the socio-political purity so many critics seem to begrudge Swift for failing to embody, its an aesthetic purity--the purity of feeling, the life-affirming way pop music like hers can force us to drop our pretenses of sophistication.”***

**— PopMatters**





## End of Year Lists

#1 Earbuddy | #1 LA Music Blog | #2 Mashable | #2 Uproxx | #3  
TIME | #4 Red Bull | #4 Salon | #4 The Atlantic | #4 The Line of Best  
Fit | #5 BrooklynVegan | #44 Juice Nothing

**17 June 2016**

**Indie Rock**

**Produced by Patrick Hyland**

**Label: Dead Oceans**

**31:25**

*Puberty: The Sequel*, because the first one wasn't difficult enough. But that's exactly what this album sounds like! A weak and confusing crisis. One minimal and sincere glare into Mitski's most vulnerable thoughts. Isolated. Lost. Lacklustre. Nervous. And desperately searching for a place to belong whilst precariously balancing on the outskirts of a certain meltdown, everything barely stitched together by reserved punky ethics and nihilistic alienation. Her troubled complexities are intriguing, her tender modesty is refreshing, and her difficult subject matter

is carefully concealed beneath a blanket of easy listening, all left on your doorstep within a half-hour timeframe, your problem now.

***“A visceral work that shares the immediacy of classic punk and confessional singer/songwriter fare at once, *Puberty 2* takes listeners behind closed doors with the kind of no-holds-barred lyrics that are likely to leave a lasting impression.”***

**— AllMusic**

BAT FOR LASHES THE HAUNTED MAN



233

**BAT FOR LASHES  
THE HAUNTED MAN**

## End of Year Lists

#4 Slant | #4 Under the Radar | #6 SPIN | #10 DIY | #17 Pitchfork  
#19 Consequence of Sound | #21 The Guardian | #23 Complex | #23  
Treble | #26 The Fly | #30 Pretty Much Amazing | #33 PopMatters  
#34 NME | #35 Beats Per Minute | #22 Juice Nothing

**15 October 2012**

**Art Pop**

**Produced by Dan Carey & David Kosten**

**Label: Parlophone**

**51:28**

*Just by admiring the artwork over there, you will already understand that we have a very different Natasha Khan to deal with this round. Gone are the pretty frills and Native American makeup, left behind is a stripped-down and naked version of the real human beneath, presenting a moody tempo which may take previously earned fans a few extra listens to fully grasp. But once they do, they will swear they've just had an intimate experience with Khan herself, as she overpowered and seduced them with bold operatic hooks and little sneaky tricks, all very*

*sturdy and necessary in its emotional darkness. What's more, this record set the stage for how much deeper we would come to understand Kahn the longer the decade went on...*

***“The Haunted Man is so effortlessly emotive that it seems to demand that we demand even more from it. Or at least, it would, if it weren't so easy to get lost in the many layers of these melodies and start thinking about the ghosts that Bat For Lashes is trying to chase away.”***

**— No Ripcord**



**232**

**HONEYBLOOD  
BABES NEVER DIE**

## End of Year Lists

#6 Sound Opinions | #13 Dork | #17 Albumism | #22 The Line of Best Fit | #43 The Skinny | #73 Juice Nothing

**4 November 2016**

**Indie Rock**

**Produced by James Dring**

**Label: Fat Cat**

**39:00**

After their debut record caused a respectable amount of ripples across the hipster rock scene, Honeyblood took some notes, perfected a couple of tricks, then struck forward with improved precision, presenting an even more impressive sophomore, *Babes Never Die*. The DIY aesthetics were still the name of the game but the hooks were much more intentional this round, never failing to deliver their catchy choruses using a full tank of confidence, hitting song after song after song. And those of us who took the time to listen to the album couldn't believe the lack of

attention it was getting. It's still one of the decade's most overlooked pieces of indie work hence why everyone needs to do their part to rectify this grand atrocity. Here's mine!

**“Producer James Dring (Jamie T, Gorillaz) skillfully amplifies Honeyblood’s bewitching hooks and taut arrangements, while preserving the band’s scruffy, DIY-pop vibe.”**

**— The A.V. Club**



**231**

**RIHANNA  
ANTI**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Fuse | #3 Entertainment Weekly | #4 Idolator | #4 Noisy | #6  
Cosmopolitan | #6 Digital Spy | #6 Passion of the Weiss | #6 Time  
Out New York | #7 Mashable | #7 The Guardian*

**28 January 2016**  
**Alternative Contemporary R&B**  
**Produced by Robyn Fenty**  
**Label: Westbury Road | Roc Nation**  
**43:36**

After (just about) releasing an album a year for seven years straight, Rihanna's insane work ethic of shoving out records driven by monumental hit singles yet fluffed with filler suddenly... came to a pause. What was she cooking? It was *Anti*! Four rotations around the sun were what it took for her eighth collection to be born and the reasons were immediately apparent upon very first listen. Flanked by an army of 20+ producers, Rhi Rhi consciously moved away from her standard commercialism and applied more art to the artist, offering us

something modern yet surprisingly experimental (in her terms anyway), ultimately and fairly praised as her best work yet. This was also her final album of the decade too which may mean... something? Or perhaps... nothing at all.

***“In many ways it’s her most deliberately uncommercial album yet, but don’t let the low-key THC vibes fool you: every harmony, drum beat, and transition on *Anti* is painstakingly finessed.”***

**— Entertainment Weekly**



QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE ...LIKE CLOCKWORK



## End of Year Lists

#1 CraveOnline | #2 FasterLouder | #3 NME | #4 The Daily Beast |  
#4 The Needle Drop | #6 Amazon | #6 Obscure Sound | #6 Rolling  
Stone | #7 Gigwise | #7 Sputnikmusic | #8 No Ripcord | #12  
musicOMH | #14 Q Magazine | #15 MOJO | #77 Juice Nothing

**3 June 2013**  
**Alternative Rock**  
**Produced by Queens of the Stone Age**  
**Label: Matador**  
**45:59**

To Josh's *Homme's* credit, he's cool. And, what's more, he knows he's cool, using his cool-power to summon the biggest names in the industry whenever he's keen on some additional hands to help with the heavy lifting. This is demonstrated on *...Like Clockwork* better than any of his other albums, that sweet spot where *Homme's* confidence greets his determination in the middle, offering us the Queens we wanted except darker, heavier, and stranger than ever before. And this attention to detail (most notably, the energetic guitar riffs) pays off with a

package stuffed with rolling punches that waste no time in delivering themselves to your jaw, flooring everyone with one of the tallest bricks on an impressively sturdy career Josh built from top to bottom.

***“A record of decadent, perverse, feel-weird hits of the winter.  
Just in time for summer.”***  
**— The A.V. Club**



**229**

**JLIN  
BLACK ORIGAMI**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Bleep | #2 Bandcamp Daily | #4 The Wire | #6 Passion of the Weiss | #6 SPIN | #8 Mixmag | #8 NOW Magazine | #10 Pitchfork | #10 PopMatters | #11 FACT | #13 Time Out New York | #14 Spectrum Culture | #16 NPR Music | #58 Juice Nothing

**19 May 2017**  
**Footwork IDM**  
**Produced by Jerrilynn Patton**  
**Label: Planet Mu**  
**44:28**

Sometimes it sounds like Jlin is throwing everything she can muster against the window in hopes that something breaks through. There's this organic tribal eastern flavour except it's shoved into the darkness then fed coffee until it jitters into a dangerous place where only horror movies can grow. But while the challenging sounds may pull you in different directions (sometimes back into the earth to bury you or sometimes shooting you up towards the scary future) she has located a definite sound which is coherently unified and undeniably hers all hers.

And there sits *Black Origami* on a strange shelf all by itself, begging to be bought even if nobody should touch it lest they become cursed and turn into tinfoil.

***“Black Origami is an album that, like its predecessors, will be savored and analyzed for the rest of the year. It’s a lock for best albums of 2017.”***

**— Consequence of Sound**

# DIE ANTWOORD



## End of Year Lists

*#4 Juice Nothing*

**12 October 2010**

**Rave Rap**

**Produced by DJ Hi-Tek**

**Label: Cherrytree**

**68:03**

Consistently written off as an industry joke, the pure persistence of this duo who live in a world of their own creation is a testament to their blind self-assurance, whether you feel this is warranted or not. And it all started right here, the initial sucker punch which proved that a danceable gangster style coupled with in-your-face but well-produced beats knew no geographical boundaries especially when the YouTube masses come knocking. It's difficult to remember a debut so unapologetically ridiculous yet so surprisingly catchy, but whatever

they did, it worked, exploding their career straight through the next 10 years, demonstrating a feat that many have struggled to accurately describe. Novelty is one word for it. Calculated is another. And zef is another.

***“\$0\$ is ephemeral, artless, spiritually vacant, and frequently difficult to decipher if you don't happen to speak Die Antwoord's native Afrikaans. It's also loaded with irresistible earworms that grow more coherent and less irritating the more you hear them.”***

**— The A.V. Club**



## End of Year Lists

#2 Sputnikmusic | #11 Billboard | #15 Pretty Much Amazing | #17 Drowned in Sound | #29 Amazon | #32 Spin | #40 No Ripcord | #44 Pitchfork | #49 Stereogum | #61 PopMatters | #105 Under the Radar | #34 Juice Nothing

**19 March 2013**  
**Contemporary R&B Art Pop**  
**Produced by Timbaland**  
**Label: RCA**  
**70:01**

The *20/20 Experience* is about self-celebration, like a healthy wank while flashing a smile in the mirror, encouraging its listener to do the same. This here record achieves the deed by utilising the tried-and-tested mix of Timberlake's seductive vocals with some of Timbaland's best production in years, taking your standard pop song, then pushing it out of the borders before sandwiching it between indulgent intros and outros without any regard to what the radio might think. The pure audacity of this lengthy challenge alone takes some smart sophistication to

maintain interest in its progression, but they manage to accomplish all of this without ever losing the groove of the party nor the style of modern commercial gold. Guilty pleasure? Nothing guilty about it, mate.

**“As a complete package, *The 20/20 Experience* will surely be remembered as one of the first of what will hopefully become a trend in popular music of releasing challenging, experimental, and expertly written material.”**

**— Sputnikmusic**





**226**

**STABSCOTCH  
UNCANNY VALLEY**

**End of Year Lists**

*#37 Juice Nothing*

**13 January 2017**

**Experimental Avant-Prog Noise Rock**

**Produced by Stabscotch**

**Label: Visual Disturbances**

**103:51**

*Uncanny Valley's boundary-pushing and indeterminate genre is the ultimate middle finger to absolutely everything in the world, coarsely renouncing the regulations with unintentional (?) humour jarred by an appalled animosity of wtf. Unfortunately, this continual mockery of where the noise threshold lies is a dangerous game, as it can wear the listener down rather quickly, which is why the disrespectful length of 1 hour and 44 minutes does eventually lose everyone in a troubled bog of raucous unpleasanties. It's these unnecessary waffies which spoil the*

*game, stretching for miles of pointless audio clutter set between the more tolerable moments, fashioning one boundless struggle which will sicken even the most seasoned of veterans no matter what their acquired levels of distress-stamina may be. It's amazingly dreadful and I don't recommend you even try.*

***“In the end, it's just this isolation and out-of-shape-ness that makes Uncanny Valley one of the most interesting “rock” albums to have emerged in a while.”***

***— Tiny Mix Tapes***

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**225**

**LUKAS RICKLI / JAKOB HILLMANN**  
**FREMDE ZEIT ADDENDUM 5**

End of Year Lists  
*#23 Juice Nothing*

**12 April 2019**  
**Modern Classical Reductionism**  
**Produced by Lukas Rickli**  
**Label: Edition RZ**  
**60:09**

*It's human nature to forever challenge the definitions of art, which is a risky sport when it comes to minimalism as a music genre. How long until we remove too much? How long until there is absolutely nothing left? Not long, if Lukas Rickli's interpretation of Jakob Ullmann's Fremde Zeit Addendum 5 is anything to go by. Because this record is the wind in a tunnel, taking about 12 minutes to produce even the slightest piano tickle and, let me tell you, when this finally happens, it is such a massive relief to hear any sound at all. Who has the creative balls to make such*

*an empty piece? How do you play this for people? How is an album so intense when it essentially doesn't do anything whatsoever?*

***“Hardly bringing any instrument to mind, it opens up a harmonic cosmos, urging the listener into it, because other than through listening to the barely recognizable, nothing is revealed.”***

**— Rainer Schmusch**



**224**

**PHOTAY  
ONISM**

## End of Year Lists

*#9 Bleep | #13 Juice Nothing*

**11 August 2017**  
**Electronic**  
**Produced by Photay**  
**Label: Astro Nautico**  
**47:48**

Reportedly inspired by quiet nature parks in the middle of scurried cities, the sprightly Latin grooves and splintered wobbles of digital excitement run so rich through *Onism* that some critics have labelled it “chillwave”. But, no, it’s not as tedious as that colourless category. Others went ahead and called it “ambient”, but, once again, no. To use such a trite term is to shamefully overlook the pure spirited enthusiasm of this overall atmosphere, shame on you. And then there were those who rightfully joined the finicky dots to form some

sort of IDM picture, except, nope, not quite right either, as *Onism* is far less pretentious than that, favouring the listeners’ well-being over any unnecessarily hyper-intensive flexing game. Instead, let’s forget standard classifications, and just enjoy these cheerful mechanical tongues as they lick the innards of our ears until we giggle, heeeehehehe.

**“What Photay achieves on *Onism* is the contrast between full auditory saturation and expanding silence, brought to life by brilliant production.”**

**— Exclaim!**



**223**

***MANCHESTER ORCHESTRA***  
***A BLACK MILE TO THE SURFACE***

**End of Year Lists**

**#4 Sputnikmusic | #31 Treble | #42 Kerrang | #43 God Is In The TV**  
**#71 Earbuddy | #71 Esquire | #39 Juice Nothing**

**28 July 2017**

**Alternative Indie Rock**

**Produced by Catherine Marks**

**Label: Favorite Gentlemen | Loma Vista**

**49:07**

Manchester Orchestra are one of the most overlooked bands in the working world, consistently delivering the goods to a criminally small amount of listening ears. But on *A Black Mile to the Surface*, they have screamed far too loud for anyone to close their eyes any longer, now losing the desperate grip on instantaneous sing-a-longs and preferring to creep into darker, more artistic territories, solemnly cowering beneath layers of emotional textures and growing up into a much needed mature adult shape of their indie. It took one of the genre's most gifted groups 13

years to create their greatest work and every song stands crooked yet as tall as their contemporaries, gathering together a creative victory in a catalogue of creative victories.

**“This is a painstakingly composed work of art--and an absolute masterpiece at that.”**

**— Kerrang!**





## End of Year Lists

*#18 Juice Nothing*

**5 April 2010**  
**Drum and Bass**  
**Produced by Noisia**  
**Label: Vision | Division | mau5trap**  
**56:51**

*For an outfit's debut, it's impressive how confidently this record charges towards every electronic corner with its aggression-dial set to maximum, blasting through your eardrums like fists to paper, forcing you to dance with an angry face for many hours after your friends have already gone home. The short songs keep the vibe consistent with a heavy flow, sharpened by production so intensely focused that the lack of accolades for these 2010 bangers is a shame no short of a sin against the very concept of computerised beats themselves. Split the Atom should*

*already be considered a modern mechanical classic by now.*

***“Split The Atom is poised to destroy the lives of clubbers worldwide and invade the senses of anyone brave enough to invest ample time in it.”***

**— Sputnikmusic**



**221**

**TRUST  
JOYLAND**

## End of Year Lists

*#21 The Skinny | #58 Pretty Much Amazing | #36 Juice Nothing*

**4 March 2014**  
**Synthwave Pop**  
**Produced by Robert Alfons**  
**Label: Arts & Crafts**  
**50:04**

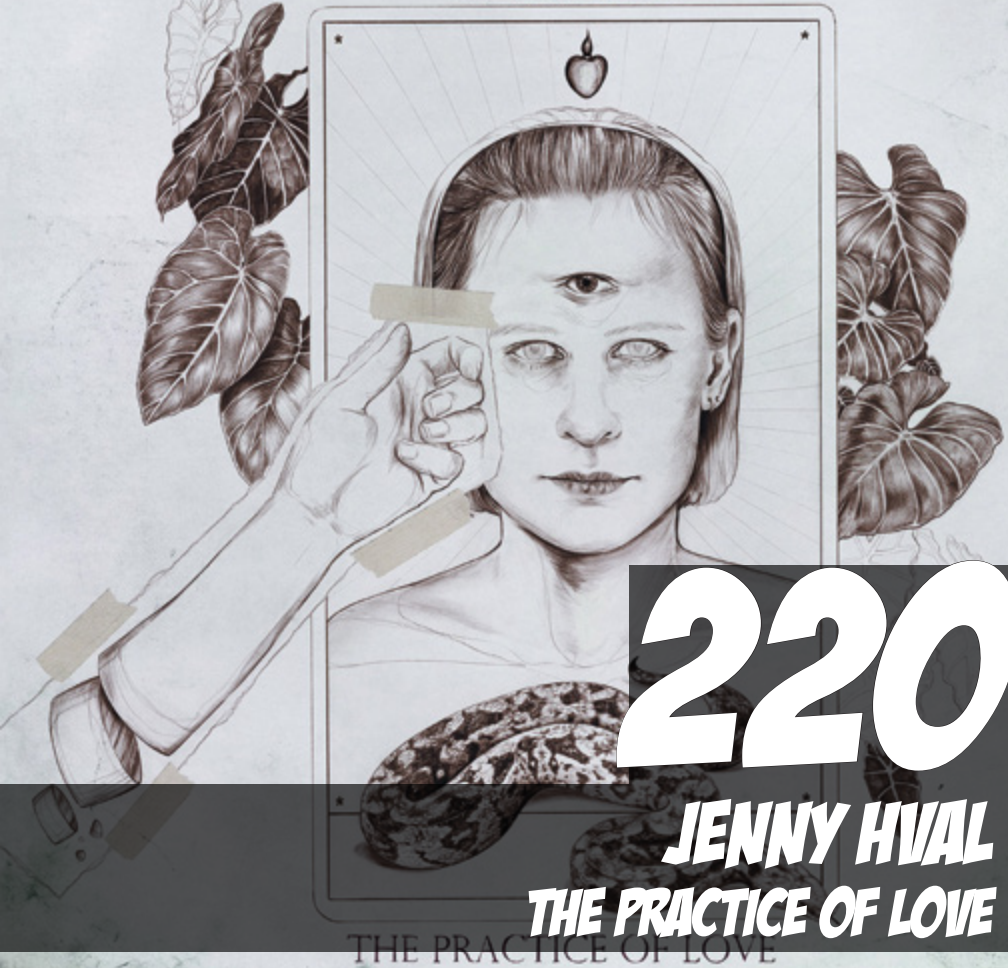
So... is this for real? Like, is it supposed to be serious or... what? It's difficult to grasp anything when we are bombarded with retro Casio-esque synths playfully producing a relaxing yet definite club-energy, smothered by the contradiction of cold bassy vocal lines spiking into occasional feminine falsettos for whatever reason. Don't worry, we've fitted all blades with cushions to ensure maximum comfort during your distress. And it crawls into my mind like a spider made from glowsticks, forcing me to envision a dreamlike cartoon sequence

where a creepy yet upbeat industrial machine is slowly drowning in soft melted cheese. Which is an irritating hallucination at best, but goddamn, it is hilarious. Even if that was never the intention?

**“Although a few tracks suffer from muddy and unfocused melodies, there are far too many great ideas, quirky earworms and sonic peaks to give any critic reason to lampoon the title of this well-conceived, well-executed album.”**

**— Exclaim!**

† JENNY HVAL †



## End of Year Lists

#24 Drift | #28 Uncut | #35 The Quietus | #38 Treble | #48 MOJO  
#55 Rough Trade | #22 Juice Nothing

**13 September 2019**

**Art Synthpop**

**Produced by Lasse Marhaug**

**Label: Sacred Bones**

**33:50**

When an artist famed for their experimental weirdness opts to venture further out into more commercial territories, it's usually a big fat red flag used to warn us that a very dangerous game is being played out there. But in the case of Hval, we have a musician who is known to occasionally overstep the awkward line, hence why, in her case, a toe-dip into the rational might actually be a beneficial shift? Strange but true, this was exactly the case on *The Practice of Love*, indicating that the unlikely pop soil can ultimately be fertile ground for these creepy

seeds to flourish as some of her best work yet. It might not feel exactly like a fully realised project, but maybe this album is merely a hint towards the next decade in which Hval infiltrates the radio system then guides the masses to perverse damnation? One can only hope!

***“She’s an outsider claiming a piece of the mainstream for herself without sacrificing what makes her music so special.”***

**— Pitchfork**



*Dolige*

**219**

GIVE YOU THE GHOST

**POLICA**

**GIVE YOU THE GHOST**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Slant | #2 musicOMH | #2 Clash | #2 The Line of Best Fit | #2 The Guardian | #2 The Fly | #3 Spinner | #4 NME | #5 DIY | #53 Pretty Much Amazing | #11 Juice Nothing

**30 April 2012**

**Indie Art Pop**

**Produced by Ryan Olson**

**Label: Totally Gross National Product**

**45:39**

So swamped by autotunage we are, that it becomes easy to forget such an overused technique still has a purpose other than disguising bad voices. Much like a distortion pedal for a guitar, or a reverb effect for a snare, we should be embracing this technology—not for any form of subtlety, but to warp the voice into a fucking instrument. Meet Polica, a prime example of where one might lose concentration on **what** it is that front lady Channy is saying, but rather, will focus on **how** she is saying it, all the while the frantic drumming shines through any gap

in her dominating vocal cords that they can find. What's more, despite these chilled echoes, it's still an exceptionally easy style to swallow, tasting yummier every single time.

***“There’s something happenin’ here and I’m not totally sure what it is but it’s exciting, intoxicating and unique, and has me wondering if people will be writing post-Polica before the year is out.”***

**— Drowned in Sound**



Tim Hecker Ravedeath, 1972



## End of Year Lists

#2 Drowned in Sound | #3 The Quietus | #9 Cokemachineglo | #11  
Tiny Mix Tapes | #13 musicOMH | #17 The Needle Drop | #19 Treble  
#21 Prefix | #23 No Ripcord | #28 SPIN | #29 Obscure Sound | #30  
Pitchfork | #30 Uncut | #36 Pazz and Jop | #48 One Thirty BPM

**14 February 2011**  
**Ambient Drone**  
**Produced by Tim Hecker**  
**Label: Kranky**  
**52:24**

“Hecker” has become synonymous with “quality 2010 ambience” but it was here, on *Ravedeath, 1982*, his sixth record, that the man was finally recognised as the figurehead he was always destined to be, now favouring churchy textures and whooshy noises to bring his meditative destruction to the world. Even better is that this album meets the listener wherever they wish to meet, fading into the background for those who want to just get on with their lives while completely consuming those brains which choose to pay it the slightest slice of attention. Many still

consider this to be his most powerful work within an already incomparable discography, leaving very little room for argument even if there is some room, and many do argue.

**“The church organ is a particular masterstroke and it imbues Hecker’s compositions here not with grandiosity, but with a sort of faded grandeur that chimes brilliantly with his familiar themes. It also offers a superb range of texture and sound, sometimes attacking and aggressive, at others soft and warm.”**

**— musicOMH.com**

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**217**

***BENT KNEE  
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY MEAN***

End of Year Lists

*#21 Juice Nothing*

**11 October 2019**

**Art Rock**

**Produced by Vince Welch**

**Label: InsideOut**

**52:06**

Here's a piece of work that far too many people have overlooked for reasons which are inexcusable no matter which way you tell them. Allow me to introduce *You Know What They Mean*, an entire record built like a premeditated structure solely intended to lift the high points higher with an array of equally impressive building blocks stacked beneath. The verses lull you into soft security before the distorted choruses kick their sneakers directly into your septum every time, while the "filler" tracks still work their magic by blessing you with breathing

room before some of the most fun end-of-the-decade rock songs destroy your house with their new school/old school edge. And the production of those guitar tones? Goddamn, I say, goddamn!

**"I know it's cliché, but the phrase "ahead of their time" comes to mind."**

**— Sonic Perspectives**



**216**

**MARIE DAVIDSON  
WORKING CLASS WOMAN**

## End of Year Lists

#3 NOW Magazine | #8 Bleep | #10 Mixmag | #14 The Quietus  
#19 Bandcamp Daily | #23 Dummy | #28 The 405 | #31 The Skinny  
#36 Loud and Quiet | #43 FACT | #73 Noisey | #88 Drift | #100  
Resident Advisor | #38 Juice Nothing

**5 Octobr 2018**  
**Minimal Synth Tech House**  
**Produced by Pierre Guerineau**  
**Label: Ninja Tune**  
**42:51**

The stereotypical repetition technique of Marie Davidson's chosen field is still a fundamental ingredient here, but what sets her apart from those obvious characteristics is the perpetual drip-feeding of smaller obscure details, each moment building upon the last computerised uneasiness until our speakers have been programmed to face the wrong way. But even these scary instrumentals are second only to her impassive spoken word vocals which bluntly taunt and motivate *Working Class Woman* into the mischievously fascinating project

that it has turned out to be. Her unique accent (I mean, nobody talks like that), her strong pronunciation, and her cynical humour all conspire to arrogantly stamp her own brand of personality throughout the product until it would be impossible to be duplicated by anyone because it's so uniquely... Marie.

***“Altogether, Working Class Woman is an incredibly cohesive art-house album with a perfect combination of electronic music and spoken word, and if it doesn't punch through the roof of clubs everywhere at least Davidson will be sorted as a kick-ass life coach.”***

**— The Skinny**

# SEPTICFLESH

Titan



215

SEPTICFLESH  
TITAN

End of Year Lists

#16 *Juice Nothing*

**20 June 2014**

**Symphonic Death Metal**

**Produced by Logan Mader**

**Label: Season of Mist | Prosthetic Records | Ward**

**45:24**

The word “epic” is thrown around so casually these days that its meaning has been tragically watered down into a much more diluted definition. However, if you would like to be reminded of what this term truly means, then please, allow Titan to be your guide. For this album could not be any bigger, applying Satanic death metal brutality to awe-inspiring symphonic instrumentation, training an orchestra with Lucifer as the conductor, sliding into your ears then aggressively mauling them right off. I get visions of an eerie operatic cartoon horror film which is

the cheesiest concept in theory, but in reality, it’s absolutely terrifying.

**“Titan sounds legendary: it reeks of omnipotence and its accompanying egotism, crafting sonic textures that most mortals wouldn’t even attempt to imitate.”**

**— Metalsucks.net**





## End of Year Lists

#3 Cosmopolitan | #4 People | #4 Rolling Stone | #7 Time | #8 NPR Music | #9 Yahoo Music | #14 Entertainment Weekly | #16 Billboard  
#21 Complex | #31 Earbuddy | #37 Thrillist | #41 The Line of Best Fit | #62 Noisey | #72 Juice Nothing

**11 August 2017**

**Pop Rock Soul**

**Produced by Ricky Reed & Drew Pearson**

**Label: Kemosabe | RCA**

**48:39**

After pushing forward with some intensely publicised accusations against (her former producer) Dr. Luke, our heroin Kesha found herself beneath a very strange spotlight indeed. The world waited with flowers and fangs, ready to evaluate the initial artistic statement from the unexpected poster girl against physical and mental abuse within the music industry, and there is no way she could not have felt that pressure. But, in the end, the ugly backstory became an important component in forcing alignment of the stars, granting Kesha a newfound voice

where the cringy pop was replaced with a more genuine soul without forgetting who she is at heart. She's a party girl! And, regardless of personal struggles and professional injustices, *Rainbow* was still a party record! So let's party.

***“Instead of dwelling on what isn’t said on the record, she chooses to use her experiences to find the strength to move on. And so we get the most authentic Kesha album yet, and it’s a triumph.”***

**— Paste Magazine**

# DISCLOSURE SETTLE



# 213

**DISCLOSURE  
SETTLE**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Time Out London | #2 Urban Outfitters | #3 Billboard | #3  
Pitchfork | #4 Gigwise | #4 PopMatters | #4 Pretty Much Amazing  
#4 Stereogum | #5 Slant | #5 Spin | #6 The Guardian | #8  
Consequence of Sound | #10 BBC Radio 6 Music | #22 Juice Nothing

**3 June 2013**  
**Deep House UK Garage**  
**Produced by Disclosure**  
**Label: PMR | Island**  
**60:37**

Barely stepping into their twenties, the Lawrence brothers released a polished debut which could only be praised as the forerunner of the UK garage heatwave which dominated 2013, leading the scene with vibrancy while provoking carefree dance moves whether you're in the club, alone in your bedroom, or simply tapping your fingers on your desk at work. And when it bangs, it bangs so freaking hard that you can smell the dancefloor and all the drug-fuelled partying involved with that naughty scene. What's more, everyone agreed; from music snobs

to oblivious club junkies, from critics to wannabe critics, and all the hipsters between. Perhaps the big tracks overshadowed the smaller ones, and perhaps the oh-so-of-the-time style will date badly, but for now, it stands as a 2010s club classic.

***“The Surrey duo have not only made 2013’s best dance record so far--they’ve also concocted one of the most assured, confident debuts from any genre in recent memory.”***

**— Pitchfork**



## End of Year Lists

#14 Gigwise | #42 Juice Nothing

**16 February 2015**

**Indie Folk**

**Produced by Charlie Andrew**

**Label: Dirty Hit**

**41:08**

*From the unique title to the interestingly relevant artwork to the music itself, it's easy to appreciate Marika as an artist of originality, one who executes delicate attention to every creative crevice of her craft, leaving no corner undusted just in case someone looks under there. Her intelligent lyrics sway gently over earthly sounds, calming your breaths with a slow sweetness so subtle that you can't fully diagnose what her intent may be. Is this sombre mood supposed to lure one into a peaceful sleep? Or is it an attempt to unnerve the dreams for countless nights*

*to come? Either/or, it sounds like a secret just for you and me, so shhh.*

***“A subtle, understated debut that takes its time, but lands its blows.”***

**— The Guardian**

# GOJIRA

L'ENFANT SAUVAGE



# 211

**GOJIRA**  
**L'ENFANT SAUVAGE**

End of Year Lists

*#30 Juice Nothing*

**26 June 2012**

**Progressive Death Metal**

**Produced by Joe Duplantier & Josh Wilbur**

**Label: Roadrunner**

**52:23**

*You know those days when all you need is an album to knock you to the floor then pummel you into a wet mess of submission? Well, then look no further than this assault tumbling down the mountain. The riffs appear as if they were summoned by God (or Satan or some otherworldly being), transforming into an ancient monster made of stone, blocking your path with both eyes set directly upon you. And in those times when it feels like the intimidation is overstaying its welcome, just know that these beasts reward persistence. And in those times when the techniques*

*feel like a one-trick pony, just know that it has already tricked you. And if you're worried about the strength of its position in your memory, then simply allow your scars to address that concern for you. It's difficult to sit still during this one.*

***“Gojira is one of the finest bands of our generation, and with L’Enfant Sauvage they’ve created another album to suit such a reputation.”***

**— BBC Music**





**210**

**XI4 XI4**

**FORGET**

## End of Year Lists

*#13 The Needle Drop | #10 Juice Nothing*

**24 February 2017**

**Noise Art Pop**

**Produced by John Congleton, Greg Saunier, & Angela Seo**

**Label: Polyvinyl**

**43:57**

Jamie Stewart has now fully become Xiu Xiu, and vice versa. The refined noise has eloped with the putrid pop, and their baby is one terrifyingly sharp freakshow, delivered with so much skill that it doesn't even sound like it's trying to be weird anymore. It's just trying to be itself whilst attempting to fit in with everybody else with a vibrantly heightened yet inhospitably antisocial energy. Its plans are disturbingly indecipherable as if this was meant to be a joyously accessible album except it had no idea how to do that exactly, and instead utterly messed it up as

one pleasantly decorated prettiness of hollow despair. And to be so unpredictably lovely yet genuinely strange in a world that has already gone far too far is a rare complication indeed, and I'm worried about everyone involved.

**“For all the coldness and brutality of *Forget* there are moments of beauty, validation and comfort, showing that these things can co-exist simultaneously.”**

**— Drowned In Sound**



# 209

**ANIMAL COLLECTIVE  
CENTIPEDE HZ**

## End of Year Lists

#21 Clash | #33 Obscure Sound | #33 The Fly | #37 Beats Per Minute | #39 Pretty Much Amazing | #40 SPIN | #45 No Ripcord | #48 DIY | #10 Juice Nothing

**4 September 2012**  
**Neo-Psychedelia Noise Pop**  
**Produced by Animal Collective**  
**Label: Domino**  
**53:33**

*Like a messy watercolour painting overloaded with far too many psychedelic ideas, Centipede Hz is a swamped mess driven by that certain magic only Animal Collective know how to execute properly. It pulls the listener in two fun directions using joyously catchy riffs that run against the excessive experimentations until everyone drowns in complexities far too dense to surface from. So, in that way, it's a challenging journey with rewarding quirks buried deep inside of itself, like a chaotic celebration, where a happy puppy gets overly excited and accidentally bites your*

*hand. Yet you love it still. Just let the thing run in circles until it tires itself out. However, the primary question on everyone's lips remains the same: is it as good as Merriweather Post Pavilion? Well, no, of course it's not. But is anything?*

***“Each song is impactful and memorable, with a fantastic approach to songcraft that focuses on minimal gestures, mixed with tremendous layers and layers of sounds.”***

***— Delusions of Adequacy***

CHARLOTTE GAINSBORG  
REST



208

**CHARLOTTE GAINSBORG**  
**REST**

## End of Year Lists

#5 FLOOD | #11 Albumism | #13 Earbuddy | #13 The Line of Best Fit | #15 Under the Radar | #17 Pitchfork | #24 Les Inrocks | #24 The Independent | #29 BrooklynVegan | #31 The Guardian | #64 Drowned in Sound | #99 Noisey | #9 Juice Nothing

**17 November 2017**

**Art Pop**

**Produced by SebastiAn**

**Label: Because**

**46:23**

The 46-year-old daughter of actress Jane Birkin and musician Serge Gainsbourg has forever lived beneath a towering parental shadow which has often proven to be somewhat of a burden on her professional life, more than most could bear. These problems only escalated when her father and half-sister passed away, causing Gainsbourg to fall into a deep swamp depression, floating upon alcohol just to deal, leading up to this, *to Rest*, her artistic statement on such turmoils. She opens herself up and pretends not to notice as we observe her inner grievings,

refusing to make eye contact and rather allowing the dreamy synth lines and sombre disco subtleties to dominate the conversation, ignoring any offerings of help. And by doing so, it appears as if she has finally escaped that shadow.

***“On Rest, Gainsbourg doesn’t just reveal her pain, but monumentalizes it, lays out a red carpet, and invites people to watch. Her refusal to be sequestered by grief is, quite literally, a death-defying feat.”***

**— Pitchfork**



**207**

**KELSEY LU**  
**BLOOD**

**End of Year Lists**

*#20 Juice Nothing*

**19 April 2019**  
**Chamber Art Pop**  
**Produced by Rodaidh McDonald**  
**Label: Columbia**  
**44:56**

What's so intriguing about *Blood* is the impracticable genre placement of the whole experience. The album somehow drops itself in the middle of a territory so uncharted that it's tricky to know exactly where it belongs on the greater landscape and yet it doesn't sound like a unique misfit record either. On the contrary, this record is wholly one thing, a coherent flavour throughout, and yet it still manages to be many other different things at once, disguising itself as a commercial pop offering without succumbing to any radio trends, then stripping itself back

to reveal a much darker maturity beneath. Such a confident execution is a feat not many artists achieve in their whole careers, but Kelsey Lu did it. And this is only her debut.

***“Kelsey Lu’s *Blood*, pumping with movement and what moves us, we tiny wholes, maybe isn’t a continent so much as it is a bordered body, graceful in its clunky fullness, jostling with every pothole, the cello its longing pores come to life.”***

**— Exclaim!**





## End of Year Lists

#1 The 405 | #2 Spin | #4 Complex | #5 Piegons & Planes | #7  
Pretty Much Amazing | #10 Cokemachineglow | #10 Consequence of  
Sound | #12 Pitchfork | #13 FasterLouder | #14 The Guardian | #15  
Billboard | #15 Time Out London | #17 A.V. Club | #32 Juice Nothing

**30 April 2013**  
**Hip Hop Pop Rap**  
**Produced by Chance the Rapper**  
**Label: n/a**  
**53:52**

*In a word? Amusing. But even considering the Laugh Out Loud wit that Acid Rap rewards, this is not a comedy rap record, because the humour is never some gimmick which detracts from the skill. Rather, it's Chance's talent as an emcee that carries this mixtape to the end, outshining even the most acclaimed of his guest stars without sounding like he means to, living up to his own hype without anybody's help, and that includes a record label. His incredibly distinctive vocal style spits genius lyrics about drugs and the internet with a positive, pretentious-free yet*

*anxious energy, and everyone agreed in unison that, yes, they liked that. Now layer these things on top of one poppy R&B jazzy gospel pizza, and you have a debut which is as trippy as the name suggests, Chance continuing to achieve quite the spoken about platform by the decade's end.*

***“What he’s accomplished with Acid Rap is nothing short of remarkable: Just two years removed from high school, and with no label support, he’s crafted the most assured breakthrough Chicago rap release since The College Dropout.”***

**— The A.V. Club**



**205**

***GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR  
ALLELUJAH! DON'T BEND! ASCEND!***

## End of Year Lists

#7 Obscure Sound | #8 FILTER | #9 No Ripcord | #9 The Needle Drop  
#12 Pitchfork | #13 Cokemachineglow | #13 Stereogum | #14 SPIN  
| #16 PopMatters | #17 Exclaim! | #20 Piccadilly Records | #21  
Pretty Much Amazing | #28 Juice Nothing

**15 October 2012**

**Post-Rock**

**Produced by Godspeed You! Black Emperor**

**Label: Constellation Records**

**53:09**

Godspeed are one of the only bands in the world whose message speaks at such overwhelmingly loud volumes without uttering a single word, painting vivid pictures using repetitive build-ups and aggressive-to-calm instrumentals alone. The orchestration towers above you, wide open and fearful, like being surrounded by an eerie emptiness during a lonely war. And then it explodes your nervous system while imploding your respiratory system in an apocalyptic wall of noise which is so purposeful and politically driven that you may feel like you're about to

be swallowed whole at any moment. Now, as dramatic as that description might seem, it's still nothing particularly new for this band, hence why so many fans were left feeling a touch disappointed after the fact (especially when considering that this was Godspeed's first release in 10 years). But, if nothing else, view this as a reminder at just how unsubstantial the majority of post-rock sounds in comparison these days.

***“Allelujah!’s symmetrical sequencing—two 20-minute suites, two 6-minute drones—is as stark and stout as anything the band have released to date, unflinching as it stares extreme horror dead in the eye.”***

**— Filter**



# 204

**BEACH HOUSE  
TEEN DREAM**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Gorilla vs. Bear | #1 Spinner | #3 Cokemachineglow | #3 NME  
#3 Stereogum | #3 Under the Radar | #5 Billboard | #5 Clash | #5  
musicOMH | #5 Pitchfork | #5 Prefix | #5 The Needle Drop | #6  
Pretty Much Amazing | #20 Juice Nothing*

**26 January 2010**  
**Indie Dream Pop**  
**Produced by Chris Coady**  
**Label: Sub Pop**  
**48:46**

Like a dense painting swirled together by a drowsy artist lost in thought, this 2010s indie pop landmark feels drained of all its colours in the prettiest of ways. There is a distant dream state here which Beach House have captured, lethargically converting the illusion into an audio format, then dressing up in an aura of sophistication. Yet even they are unable to disguise its timidness, the whole room watching as the creation politely waves softly from the corner, generating a light breeze at most. It doesn't want to cause a fuss or even impress anyone. It simply wants to

do what it does. And what it does just so happens to be a lushness of magic so influential that this outfit's name pretty much became the definition of the genre throughout the decade.

***“They’ve made an absolutely magical record--the jagged edges of their past have been smoothed by the sea, making Teen Dream a soft shore gem in the crown of the great chronicles of youth.”***

**— NME**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Time Out New York | #3 Rough Trade | #3 Time Out London  
#7 Vulture | #7 XLR8R | #8 Crack Magazine | #8 Pitchfork | #11  
musicOMH | #12 CMJ | #12 Digital Spy | #12 Resident Advisor | #13  
Flavorwire | #13 Gigwise | #25 Juice Nothing

**7 April 2014**  
**Nu-Electro-Disco**  
**Produced by Todd Terje**  
**Label: Olsen**  
**59:10**

Oh, it's album time alright! And for a debut, Todd sure pulls off his album time superbly, squishing me into a distinctive shape then poking me until go off dancing casually into space, enjoying this predominantly instrumental synth affair as I cover mass distance at my leisure. It's far out there, man. But not so far out there that we lose sight of the easy listening, just go with it. Anyway, there was a ton of hype behind this release, and in the end, everyone may have been a little over-excited with their dribble. Some songs rise way above the others. The production

sounds a tad "bedroom". And it does tire near the end. But, whatever. The man's talent for allowing a track to stew properly before blasting them with a joyous jolt of electricity is so impressive that any such minor details have already been forgiven.

***“Adventurous but not selfish, intelligent but not difficult, a victory lap of sorts but hardly congratulatory, Terje’s first album is astoundingly balanced and astonishingly broad, a wider serving of the man’s artistic vision that ultimately proves just as satisfying as his single servings have in the past.”***

**— XLR**





S K Y I N G

# 202

**THE HORRORS  
SKYING**

## End of Year Lists

#2 Clash | #2 MOJO | #3 BBC | #3 NME | #3 The Fly | #5 Bigger Than The Sound | #5 Under the Radar | #6 Uncut | #7 musicOMH | #7 One Thirty BPM | #11 Q Magazine | #12 DIY | #16 The Guardian | #17 Consequence of Sound | #53 Juice Nothing

**11 July 2011**  
**Neo-Psychedelia**  
**Produced by Craig Silvey**  
**Label: XL**  
**54:36**

The Horrors may have quite a substantial amount of commercial/critical success stuffed into their skinny jeans but they are oft-overlooked for the evolutionary abilities they harness. However, if you listen with the right ears at the right time of night, their steps per each release are always moving slightly forward (or perhaps sideways?) and this is undeniably an intentional plan every time. On *Skying* specifically, everything felt lighter, happier, and more optimistic, as if they had found themselves within themselves and were now just allowing The Horrors

to confidently expand within their own shoegaze fuzziness, comfortable to sit down for a little bit, but not for too long as they've got to move somewhere else shortly. This admirable practice of progression without knocking their discography over is a rare display of artistic sincerity, hence why it's not too far fetched to consider this outfit as one of the most consistent acts to come out of Britain in the last 20 years or so.

**“Regardless of where they end up next, the Horrors have already traveled much further than most listeners would have imagined.”**

**— AllMusic**



**201**

**HUNDRED WATERS  
THE MOON RANG LIKE A BELL**

## End of Year Lists

#38 Pitchfork | #44 Pretty Much Amazing | #46 SPIN | #59 Under  
the Radar | #68 musicOMH | #48 Juice Nothing

**27 May 2014**

**Downtempo Art Pop Folktronica**

**Produced by Hundred Waters**

**Label: OWSLA**

**48:00**

*A plant takes its time to grow; a slow but determined process, allowing the greenery to develop its unique textures whilst experimenting to find the most effortless direction for its tender branches to reach towards. It values being untouched and is grateful for those details which we would take for granted. Such as the gentle embrace of the Sun. Or the angelic dew drops which moisten the soil. What a serene image of gradual beauty that is! Who would ever dare to apply such a heavenly concept to an (essentially) electronic-based music group? Me. I would. But it is*

*not without merit, as these adjectives and symbolisms are exactly what makes Hundred Waters so distinct within this otherwise commonplace genre pool, and if you don't believe me, then read my review whilst listening to the album at the same time. Perhaps you'll disagree, but regardless, please give me money.*

***“It’s the product of a band that’s clearly thinking on their feet, engaging with the conflicting styles of those around them and assimilating new behaviors without sacrificing their own, changing with the world around them to create something refreshingly distinct and beautifully engaging.”***

**— The Line of Best Fit**



## End of Year Lists

#11 AllMusic | #23 Cokemachineglow | #39 The Needle Drop | #43  
No Ripcord | #14 Juice Nothing

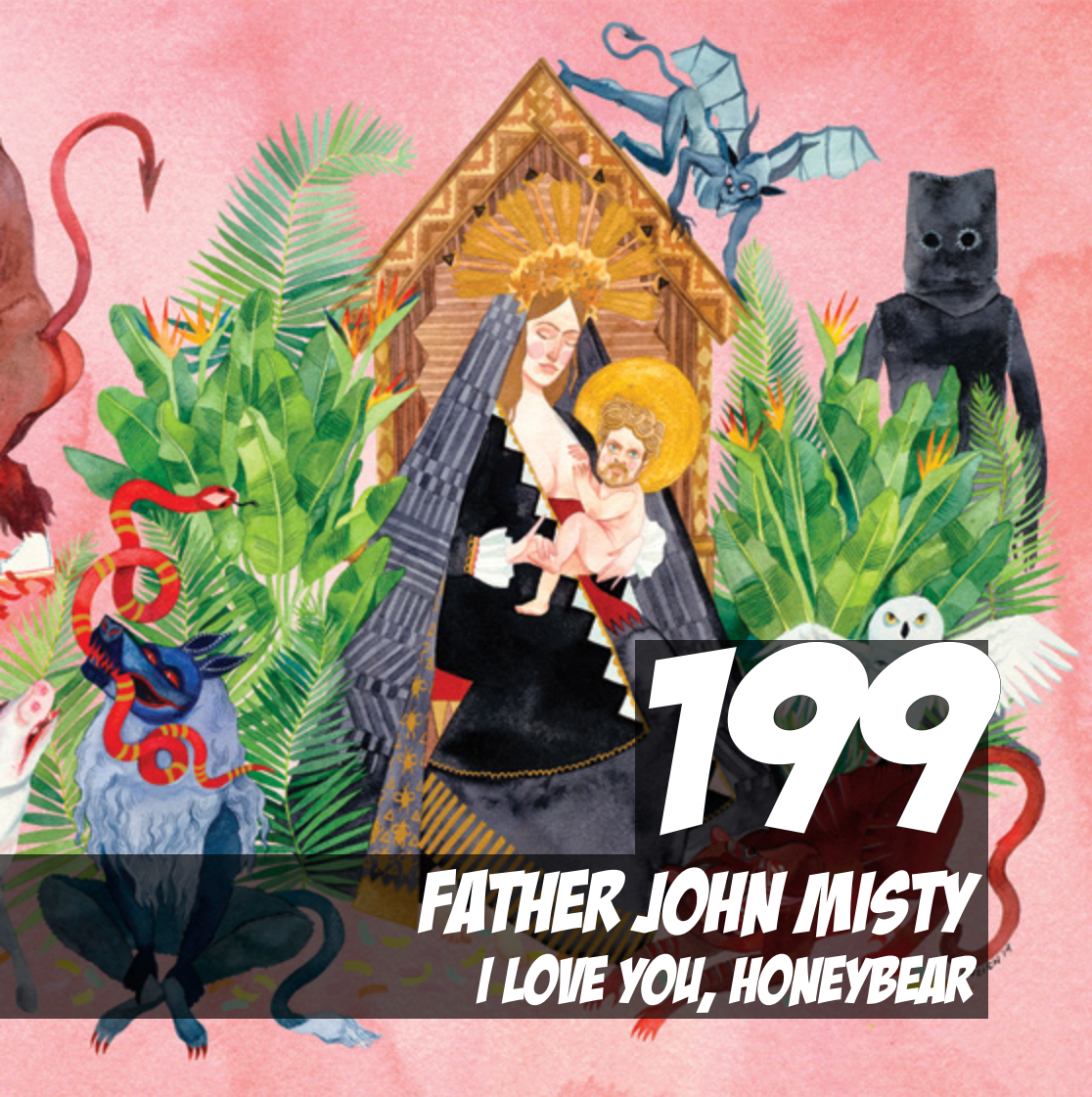
**4 September 2012**  
**Experimental Art Pop Rock**  
**Produced by Deerhoof**  
**Label: Polyvinyl Records**  
**30:01**

*Like some adult Japanese cartoon drawn by a sadist on mushrooms, Breakup Song scrapes the fine line between infectiously catchy and intolerable intensity quivering in the red. It is a place where you, the listener, has to prepare themselves for being embraced with love or completely alienated by anxiety at a moment's notice whilst being forced different objects until you're so overstuffed with stuff that you may come apart at any second. But thankfully, you don't, due to some 6-year-old kid sticking you all back together with colourful putty, the*

*cracks now intertwining with patterns of rainbows puking out of the sides. Just be careful you don't cut your hands whilst you're playing with that, darling. You might hurt yourself.*

***“Deerhoof’s eleventh album continues their long tradition of delighting and confounding in equal measure.”***

**— The Fly**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Drowned in Sound | #1 Loud and Quiet | #1 musicOMH | #1 Paste  
#1 Time Out New York | #1 Under the Radar | #2 Rough Trade | #3  
CraveOnline | #3 Gigwise | #3 Magnet | #3 NOW Magazine | #3  
PopMatters | #3 The Guardian | #4 Diffuser | #37 Juice Nothing

**10 February 2015**

**Indie Folk**

**Produced by Jonathan Wilson**

**Label: Bella Union | Sub Pop**

**44:54**

*Josh Tillman fell in love with a girl named Emma and she inspired him so much that he wrote an entire album about her and him and that love feeling he was experiencing. Now, before you rush to grab the nearest hollow object to spew your guts into, you must know that this is not the average overly-romantic gush-fest that you may have come to expect, but rather an honest representation of relationships told by perhaps the snarkiest voice in the folk scene right now. His sarcastic confessions hide behind cynical black humour and exaggerated airs of emotionless*

*sophistication, quick to surrender his own faults whilst acknowledging the annoyances of his female counterpart too, all the while unable to fully shake the simple fact that he really really loves this girl. They're married now.*

***“For all the layers of irony on *I Love You, Honeybear*, the biggest irony of all might be that such an ostensibly knotty and confusing album’s real strength lies in something as prosaic and transparent as its author’s ability to write a beautiful melody.”***

**— The Guardian**





## End of Year Lists

*#19 Juice Nothing*

**29 March 2019**  
**Ambient Art Pop**  
**Produced by Karyyn**  
**Label: Mute**  
**46:23**

The *Quanta Series* is a cheat record. For starters, it's more of a compilation than a full-length debut, consisting of previously released singles, already tried-and-tested-and-successful before the product stepped out into existence. Furthermore, her emotional dancey atmospherics seems as if she's raced to the very cutting-edge of the already established "what's hot" of modern audio textures, essentially a display of attention paid to the forerunners then mimicked, never actually achieving anything new (even if you could be fooled into thinking

otherwise). And yet in doing so, she's created the perfect representative of our end-of-decade, encompassing an art form which would have sounded very alien a mere 10 years ago—not to mention that these songs were also inspired by the recent deaths of some of her relatives, which does provide an additional sucker punch of omg, I'm so sorry.

***"She crafted something challenging, mysterious and memorable. Gorgeous was simply a by-product."***  
**— Exclaim!**



## End of Year Lists

#18 The Vinyl Factory | #21 Time Out London | #43 Rough Trade  
#49 MOJO | #49 NPR Music | #47 Juice Nothing

**16 February 2015**  
**Alternative Art Pop R&B**  
**Produced by Richard Russell**  
**Label: XL**  
**45:57**

Devastated by the loss of their recently deceased father which further reminded them of their older sister's recent passing, the 20-year-old Ibeyi twins decided to use this for the direction for their debut album. They would reflect on love, death, and family, concentrating their vocals as the main centre point, while the tribal rhythms worked only to keep the heartbeat alive. Unsurprisingly, such an ambitious approach paid off, as this downtempo self-titled album is one incredibly unique cultural amalgamation, perhaps only made possible by the duo's Cuban/French

heritage, while they pay their tributes in both English and the West African language of Yoruba. As a result, this release offers an unusual amount of ancient spirituality within the innovative artiness which could be considered distressed yet hopeful as well as traditional and modern at the same time.

***“With such masterful creativity and an ability to connect with listeners emotionally, no matter what language they are singing in, Ibeyi may have already released the debut album of the year.”***

**— No Ripcord**



## End of Year Lists

#9 *Pretty Much Amazing* | #14 *Urban Outfitters* | #15 *The Fly* |  
#21 *Beats Per Minute* | #21 *DIY* | #23 *Spinner* | #24 *Pitchfork*  
#24 *Time Out London* | #25 *Gigwise* | #25 *Under the Radar* | #28  
*Consequence of Sound* | #29 *Stereogum* | #26 *Juice Nothing*

24 July 2012

Synthpop

Produced by Purity Ring

Label: 4AD | Last Gang

38:20

*Shrines is so adorably sweet that one could easily mistake it for a children's product. But if you can crack through the prettiness of the hard candy shell, then there is a creepy chill to be found within this album's centre. The music's druggy warps are a good example of this, so light and digestible that one could easily find themselves frolicking through the forest, forgetting that the witch and the wolf are both closing in on you need to find grandma's house right now! But if this happens to you, you must remember to pause and listen to the poetic words that are here*

*to guide you. You won't believe what this euphoric female voice has to say to you, it truly is a wonderfully poetic gift to receive just before you drown beneath a sea of sound and die, the end.*

***“Purity Ring have pulled off the feat of producing one of the year's most arresting debuts, a Grimm Tales for the 2010s, shrouded in the illusory threads of contemporary club music, while sounding like no-one else but themselves.”***

**— BBC Music**



# 195

## **TROPICAL FUCK STORM A LAUGHING DEATH IN MEATSPACE**

### End of Year Lists

#12 Double J | #16 MondoSonoro | #16 The Quietus | #22  
Sputnikmusic | #47 BrooklynVegan | #48 The Needle Drop | #20  
Juice Nothing

**4 May 2018**

**Art Blues Punk Noise Rock**

**Produced by Gareth Liddiard**

**Label: Tropical Fuck Storm**

**47:18**

Why, oh why, was this not released under *The Drones* band moniker?? It's a fair query, due to 50% of *Tropical Fuck Storm* standing as the same core members of the aforementioned Aussie soldiers, while the album itself is far from some stylistic reinvention for either of them. In fact, *A Laughing Death in Meatspace* kind of sounds like the best parts of *The Drones*, extracted and exaggerated, perhaps less dramatic but with more gravel, nightmarishly scary in a very real way, and about as humorous as a nervous laugh could be. It's not necessarily a comfortable

experience. Not a nice feeling, *per se*. But still one of the best *Drones* records ever made. Except it's not a *Drones* record. Which is only more upsetting.

**“This whole album really takes no prisoners, and brings to mind everything that was good in the underground music scene from the eighties into the early/mid-nineties”**

**— Punknews.org**





**194**

**WOLF ALICE  
MY LOVE IS COOL**

## End of Year Lists

#3 Under the Radar | #4 Drowned in Sound | #4 NME | #5 Gigwise  
#6 Digital Spy | #6 musicOMH | #6 Rough Trade | #6 Time Out  
London | #11 Blare | #13 The Guardian | #25 Variance | #32 The  
Skinny | #43 FasterLouder | #43 No Ripcord | #21 Juice Nothing

**22 June 2015**  
**Alternative Indie Rock**  
**Produced by Mike Crossey**  
**Label: Dirty Hit**  
**48:52**

Armed with radiant vocals, exciting rock riffs, and an excessive amount of confidence, Wolf Alice achieved something practically unheard of: a typical alternative rock debut which didn't try to be special nor steer away from the blueprint, yet somehow sounded completely fresh and energised, well above its comrades. The mood of this record covers countless variations of self-awareness, tainted by a childlike sadness of sentimentality as if cursed by the naivety of an adolescent who is wise beyond its years. But this is not some unripe bleakness of a

record, rather a spirited hooky affair packed heavy with claws, occasionally dabbling in surrounding genres to sharpen them without risking any core 90s ethics. And it totally lived up to the excessive hype attached.

***“There’s a Jekyll and Hyde quality to Wolf Alice’s debut that gently reels you in with its gossamer folk pop and lilting indie-pop before it going for the jugular with savage bursts of psychogrunge guitars.”***

**— Uncut**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Flavorwire | #1 Wondering Sound | #3 Entertainment Weekly | #5 TIME | #5 Vulture | #7 Pretty Much Amazing | #10 musicOMH | #11 Pitchfork | #15 The 405 | #16 American Songwriter | #17 A.V. Club  
#17 Time Out London | #19 Cosmopolitan | #8 Juice Nothing

**23 September 2014**

**Art Pop**

**Produced by Adrian Utley**

**Label: Matador**

**33:38**

As the eccentrically stylish cover would suggest, this is a flamboyant album which looks away, remaining vulnerable and dramatically broken while still attempting to seduce everyone without relying on tacky tactics to do so. Rather, it achieves a certain sexiness with a simple mood, floating all over your body as if a blanket of minimalism, turning you on regardless of your sexual orientation. And these are the feelings which essentially make *Too Bright* the perfect record. It's talented. It's well produced. It's wholly original. And, at 33 minutes long, it does not waste a

second of your time.

***“Too Bright is a near immaculate work. It’s bold but vulnerable and finds Hadreas taking risks in structure, content and sound.”***

**— CMJ**

LEPROUS – COAL



End of Year Lists

*#29 Juice Nothing*

**20 May 2013**

**Progressive Metal**

**Produced by Vegard Tveitan & Heidi Solberg Tveitan**

**Label: Inside Out Music | Century Media Group**

**55:49**

Every single aspect of this record methodically obliterates any prog-metal, from the oomph production, to the punchy riffs, and, in particular, the clean vocal deliveries which know how to soar into epic regions of beauty or scream bloody death when it's feeling less healthy, genuinely believing every word it cries whilst working like an instrument all on its own. The entire experience of *Coal* is so technically unpredictable that it hardly clings on, stretching far out whilst building towards something bigger than itself without ever fully reaching it, playing with you

during the ride. And as the countless memories of catchy tricks near closing time, it somehow reaches its pinnacle right at the end, concluding with its fully erect cock pointing proudly towards war.

**“*Coal* is exploratory and disorientating, and showcases the Norwegians’ feel for explosive, exciting, moving music.”**

**— Louder Sound**



## End of Year Lists

#2 MAGNET | #3 *Obscure Sound* | #5 BBC | #5 Pazz and Jop | #7  
Spinner | #9 MOJO | #11 *American Songwriter* | #12 *A.V. Club* | #13  
*Drowned in Sound* | #13 *Uncut* | #14 *The Guardian* | #15 FILTER  
#17 *No Ripcord* | #17 *One Thirty BPM* | #8 *Juice Nothing*

**24 October 2011**  
**Experimental Rock**  
**Produced by Kathleen Brennan**  
**Label: Anti-**  
**44:44**

Seven years is a long time to wait for an album from a bonafide legend, and the mind naturally wanders. Has Tom Waits given up? Has he lost the spark he once harnessed? Is he sick?? And then *Bad As Me* leaps out from the sewers and bites you on the butt and you get rabies and you're the fool once again, just like the last 15 times. Age means nothing when you're the grittiest man on the planet, and this is as loud and raw as ever, aware of his strengths and exploiting them for all they are worth, perhaps the strongest evidence we have that this could be the man's swan

song. We've heard nothing since and, truthfully, if this is it, then hats off to you, Mr. Waits. You did a good job.

***“The fact that he can produce an album like *Bad As Me*, with more energy, invention and sheer excitement that artists half his age stands as testimony that Tom Waits remains one of the true giants of music.”***

**— musicOMH**





## End of Year Lists

#2 MAGNET | #2 PopMatters | #5 TIME | #8 A.V. Club | #10 Listen Before You Buy | #12 Slant | #15 Amazon | #16 eMusic | #20 Cokemachineglow | #21 musicOMH | #21 Under the Radar | #26 Pretty Much Amazing | #27 Pitchfork | #15 Juice Nothing

**3 September 2013**

**Indie Rock**

**Produced by Tucker Martine**

**Label: Anti-**

**38:14**

*Straightforward compositions take sharp and unsettling turns right in the middle. Happy music hides its sad underbelly in shame. This pop is rotten, all peculiarly arranged around one eccentric central character: Neko Case herself. The strength of her multi-dimensional vocals and honest lyrics work together as a momentous force, demanding authority, refusing to play it safe and standing defiant against the norm. It's glittered with so many details that it's impossible to grasp anything solid, except for the frequent indirect hints at darkness blurred by humour,*

*the humour blurred by darkness, and the decision to remain headstrong without any facade, exposing details so personal that it's obvious Neko didn't make this album for us. She made it for herself.*

**“The Worse Things Get is a no-brainer Album of the Year.”**

**— Tiny Mix Tapes**

# MASTODON



# 189

**MASTODON**  
**THE HUNTER**

**the Hunter**

## End of Year Lists

#18 The Quietus | #23 Treble | #38 Rolling Stone | #40 Drowned in Sound | #47 Pazz and Jop | #47 Q Magazine | #61 PopMatters | #6 Juice Nothing

**27 September 2011**  
**Progressive Metal**  
**Produced by Mike Elizondo**  
**Label: Reprise | Roadrunner**  
**52:54**

Many have hypothesised that *The Hunter* was the result of Mastodon tightening up their jammy grooves and trimming down the complexities in order to creep into the charts a little higher up this time. A sell-out record, if you will. There is some definite merit in this theory but one cannot escape that Mastodon is as Mastodon does, and they weren't quite able to shed their epic energy and aggressive attacks, the whole effort sharpened into a point to stab the mainstream where it hurts rather than completely losing grasp on their integrity. And, if nothing else, this

album proved that this band were not done evolving just yet. Or ever.

***“From start to finish, *The Hunter* is a collection of songs that inadvertently expands their repertoire and capabilities while they turn off their heads and let their fingers tell the story.”***

**— No Ripcord**



**188**

***BILLY WOODS & KENNY SEGAL  
HIDING PLACES***

**End of Year Lists**

**#5 TIME | #18 Juice Nothing**

**29 March 2019**

**Abstract East Coast Hip Hop**

**Produced by Kenny Segal**

**Label: Backwoodz Studioz**

**40:23**

With an already exceptionally impressive discography backing his talent, only now has Billy attained the first-class production to grant his words the death blow they always deserved. However, try as Segal does to outshine Billy at every turn, it's still a relatively futile exercise as the rapper relentlessly forces the spotlight upon himself using an old school flow that doesn't sell itself as a nostalgia piece, shunning commercial hooks while ticking every hip hop box with filthy hands. Finally, Billy Woods has done the thing he was always destined to do, and one

can only hope that he recognises Kenny's play in this achievement, the two collaborating for many years to come.

***“Ultimately, Hiding Places is Woods trying to reconcile his own history in the most direct way imaginable. Never has he been so honest about himself, his fears, and his own mortality.”***

**— Pitchfork**



# 187

**PWR BTTM**  
**PAGEANT**

**End of Year Lists**  
*#16 Juice Nothing*

12 May 2017

**Indie Rock Queercore**

**Produced by Christopher Daly**

**Label: Polyvinyl | Big Scary Monsters**

**33:43**

Two days before its release, the cheery buzz of *Pageant* was shattered as member Ben Hopkins was accused of initiating uninvited sexual contact with fans. The label dropped them immediately. Album distribution was ceased. Every festival closed its doors. And it's all a shame, really. Because, if you can exercise a certain blind slice of denial, *Pageant* is easily one of the most important pop albums of the decade. They confidently bounced into the public eye as if they were the flamboyant poster boys of the drama queen queer scene, proudly

giving the sparkling culture the giddy voice it deserved without exploiting their campy bubbles as some eccentric gimmick. And you'd find yourself prancing around your room, forgetting about the charges, then you remember, and you'd be like... ah, damn.

***“The last thing PWR BTTM are ready to do is mope; instead they’ve chosen to create a record that feels defiantly optimistic and celebratory.”***

**— AllMusic**



LORDE

PURE

HEROINE

**186**

**LORDE  
PURE HEROINE**

## End of Year Lists

#1 *FasterLouder* | #3 *Idolator* | #3 *Slant* | #4 *Billboard* | #5 *eMusic*  
| #6 *The Daily Beast* | #7 *Amazon* | #7 *Rolling Stone* | #9 *A.V. Club*  
#10 *Clash* | #13 *The Guardian* | #13 *The Line of Best Fit* | #17  
*CraveOnline* | #17 *No Ripcord* | #64 *Juice Nothing*

**27 September 2013**

**Pop**

**Produced by Joel Little**

**Label: Universal | Lava | Republic**

**37:08**

*If you ever needed some restoration of faith in the radio world, then get in line to worship Lorde, our new saviour foretold by the pop prophecies. Her sexy vocals extend beyond her years as the production serves this maturity perfectly, everything culminating in some of the most satisfying choruses this decade had to offer, not sticking in your head by reasons of cheap gimmicks, but with calculated manoeuvres designed to dig themselves into your brain folds until you've developed a hole of addiction that only she can fill. And, as we already know, this was*

*not a fluke as she has continued to rise at her own pace from this debut, indicating a true superstar who was only learning to walk when she already left us all behind.*

***“The popularity of Pure Heroine suggests all is not lost. It says there’s still an intellectual, polished and important place for pop, that doesn’t rely on open letters, open legs, Twitter, twerking and obscenely desperate electro hooks.”***

**— Clash**



**185**

**TURNSTILE  
TIME & SPACE**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Kerrang! | #3 Revolver | #8 BrooklynVegan | #13 The New York Times: Jon Caramanica | #33 Rock Sound | #35 NME | #37 BLARE  
#11 Juice Nothing*

**23 February 2018**  
**New York Hardcore**  
**Produced by Will Yip**  
**Label: Roadrunner**  
**25:15**

Turnstile's sophomore initially appears so conventionally hardcore that it's almost satire. The anthemic shouts are tireless, bulging out from an intrusive frenzy of chaotic clamour blowing your cheeks backwards until you find yourself calculating where to have your next fistfight. But these familiarities have also been further decorated by the sneeriest of ploys, disguising the devil beneath catchy bounces and danceable pop attitudes, holding tight onto your attention with cheeky hand claps, brief piano bangs, and nostalgic surf harmonies until the 25 minutes have left a

wet forehead behind. It doesn't take itself too seriously yet the standard aggressions of hardcore philosophies refuse to jeopardise their live realness until you can smell the show. And it smells very dangerous indeed.

**“Sneaking under the half-hour mark, *Time & Space* is a comprehensive thrash that places Turnstile as the most inventive, forward-thinking band in hardcore.”**

**— DIY Magazine**



"TETSUO & YOUTH"  
BY LUPE FIASCO  
ALYRIC ON CANVAS 16" x 16"

PARENTAL  
ADVISORY  
EXPLICIT CONTENT

## End of Year Lists

#8 Stashed | #11 Complex | #31 PopMatters | #50 Pigeons & Planes | #50 HipHopDX | #50 XXL | #38 Juice Nothing

**20 January 2015**  
**Conscious Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Charles “Chilly” Patton**  
**Label: 1st & 15 | Atlantic**  
**78:43**

After a few struggled hiccups, Lupe’s desperate urgency to reprove himself as a top contender in the rap game is very apparent on *Tetsuo & Youth*, standing as an archetypal example of what this type of upset determination would sound like. He has thrown absolutely everything he’s got into this: from his high speed flows attacking with more words than you could possibly digest in one listen; to the optimistic preachy messages he is renowned for; to the sleek production which stays within the boundaries of feather-padded safeness to guarantee at least some

level of success. At times, it does suffer from its bloated length, but at other times, this album sounds almost like a modern rap classic. Almost.

**“Lupe Fiasco doesn’t present tracks that are just a hot beat and some memorable bars--he’s aiming for cinematic moments and drawing you into the atmosphere he seeks to create.”**

**— RapReviews.com**



memories  
**JESCA HOOP**  
are now

**183**

**JESCA HOOP  
MEMORIES ARE NOW**

## End of Year Lists

*#45 Drowned in Sound | #45 Norman Records | #14 Juice Nothing*

**10 February 2017**

**Indie Folk**

**Produced by Blake Mills**

**Label: Sub Pop**

**37:32**

Jesca is well aware of her strongest point. It's her vocals. And she handles her natural gift with an unusually eerie creativity, baring her inventive melodies without any clutter, ensuring you notice her above anything else during her peace offering. And, with that, her experimental sweetness proves that you don't need noise to clear a forest, but you can achieve much the same result with an overwhelmingly ominous curiosity and a nervous euphoria, inspiring positive earthly changing by utilising an explosion of goosebumps alone. Some may call it

a little top-heavy, but she still makes a noble effort to never wander too far away from the magic path and even when she does, your jaw will still be hanging slack from those first songs anyway, so it's fine.

***“Hoop has been producing thought-provoking, arresting folk music since Kismet was released nearly a decade ago, but this is her most cutting, cohesive, and critical record yet.”***

**— The Line of Best Fit**



SARAH  
NEUFELD

THE  
RIDGE

S

N

T

**182**

**SARAH NEUFELD**  
**THE RIDGE**

## End of Year Lists

#30 No Ripcord | #31 Sputnikmusic | #49 Norman Records | #10  
Juice Nothing

**26 February 2016**

**Post-Minimalism**

**Produced by Colin Stetson & Tim Hecker**

**Label: Paper Bag**

**43:06**

Due to her touring/studio work with Arcade Fire and her collaborative efforts with Colin Stetson, a little apprehension may be warranted whether Sarah Neufeld had enough expertise to carry an album all by herself? And the answer is, well, of course, she does, otherwise, why would you be reading this text right now? Her wordless vocals gently float over the purposefully minimalist drumming patterns but both of these elements naturally take a backseat, careful not to distract from her gorgeously proficient violin skills which do the real talking whilst

donning classical attire with an artsy flair. The repetitive melodies dazzle with deliveries as sharp as they are daintily feminine, and each listen excites more than the last, clearing a sheer gem of a release which is sorely overlooked by most of the decade's critics.

**“The album’s greatest strength lies in its cinematic quality. Every song feels like a scene in the bigger dream The Ridge represents as a whole.”**

**— Exclaim!**

**MATANA  
ROBERTS**



**181**

**MATANA ROBERTS**  
**COIN COIN CHAPTER ONE: GENS DE COULEUR**  
**LIBRE**

**COIN COIN**  
**CHAPTER ONE**  
**GENS DE COULEUR LIBRES**

## End of Year Lists

#27 The Needle Drop | #43 Prefix | #48 Tiny Mix Tapes | #13 Juice  
Nothing

**10 May 2011**  
**Avant-Garde Spiritual Jazz**  
**Produced by Matana Roberts**  
**Label: Constellation**  
**61:15**

No matter what your tolerance for avant-garde jazz gospel might be, *Coin Coin Chapter One* can be both a testing and a rewarding listen. Telling the miserable story about black slavery in an optimistic manner, Matana's style of using animalistic vocals and improvised structures allows a lot of room for the listener to lean so far to the side that they fall off. But the mix of uplifting acapellas and traumatic noises works in a very intense yet enchanting fashion, celebrating Matana herself as she throws the hoop of ambition as far as she can, then she retrieves

it with dirty feet and a big smile on her face. It's truly a unique stopping point in this book if you're looking for something different and did I mention it's all recorded live? It is!

***“In spite of the album’s wilfully hard-to-stomach intensity, [it] will appeal to fans of art music of many different backgrounds.”***

**— No Ripcord**



FIRE!  
ORCHESTRA

**180**

AP  
**FIRE! ORCHESTRA**  
**ARRIVAL**

End of Year Lists

*#17 Juice Nothing*

**24 May 2019**

**Experimental Big Band**

**Produced by Andreas Werliin**

**Label: Rune Grammofon**

**66:05**

*Forever carbonating beneath the crust of mainstream appreciation, each of this band's four albums have worked together like pillars, now an undeniable structure of pure jazzy talent so tall that most people can't even see it. And while it may take a few more bricks before we can smash the heads of a larger audience, at least for now we can appreciate that they are rising, Arrival arriving as the band's greatest work yet. The chaotic build-ups are a power only matched by the well-chosen female vocalists who unify the project as a gorgeous piece of passion, and, what's more,*

*it's not like "experimental big band" music is of abundance this decade anyway, right? Hence why it's a relief that these guys are more than capable of carrying the torch all by themselves.*

***"As a whole, Arrival is an exercise in complex, reined-in energy. Relying more on formal arrangements, the performances in these songs deliver meaning through layers of texture, atmosphere, and raw instinct."***

**— AllMusic**



## End of Year Lists

#21 Decibel | #16 Juice Nothing

**15 June 2018**

**Black Metal**

**Produced by Devo**

**Label: Norma Evangelium Diaboli**

**42:55**

This Swedish black metal band formed in 1993 and then took 10 years before they even released their debut studio full-length. In fact, during their 25 years of existence, they have only released three albums in total, *Hekatombe* being the third. Still, what they lack in productivity they gain in a persistent downpour of praise from fans who salivate over Funeral Mist's minimal output, praising each album's refusal to use decorative additions or bend styles just for the sake of it, rather selecting a simple onslaught of blast beats, creatively speedy riffs, and demonic

vocals to deliver their devil. In a genre with very restrictive characteristics of violent tantrums, it's unfathomably impressive how this band manages to distinguish themselves from the herd without breaking any of the black commandments.

***“It’s fast, heavy, aggressive, and unapologetic. Though there’s no mystery to the outcome of an album like this, *Hekatombe* feels fresher, more passionate, and more spontaneous than most traditional black metal records of 2018.”***

**— Angry Metal Guy**



# JAPANDROIDS



# 178

**JAPANDROIDS**

**CELEBRATION ROCK**

## End of Year Lists

#2 A.V. Club | #2 PopMatters | #3 Alternative Press | #3 Entertainment Weekly | #3 SPIN | #3 Spinner | #4 DIY | #4 Pazz & Jop | #5 Pretty Much Amazing | #6 MAGNET | #7 Slant | #7 Stereogum | #7 The Line of Best Fit | #31 Juice Nothing

**5 June 2012**  
**Indie Rock**  
**Produced by Japandroids**  
**Label: Polyvinyl**  
**35:10**

*A pop-punk atmosphere circling high energy riffs and shouty anthemic choruses may sound like the kind of crap you'd find on a buddy high school teen movie, but if so, then Japandroids are certainly the smartest kids in the cafeteria. They're enjoying the fun of youth yet continue to analyse the bigger picture of life, feeling their childhood passing them by with feelings of nostalgia about the years falling away. And as this runs at 35 minutes a spin, they do not waste a second of your time, showing off their simplistic yet confident compositions which are refreshingly*

*mature and on some sort of a mission. And you'll never forget the party, fireworks and all.*

***“Celebration Rock is a tipsy toast to the very best moments in life.”***

***— Slant Magazine***



**177**

**KATE TEMPEST**  
**EVERYBODY DOWN**

## End of Year Lists

#4 BBC Radio 6 Music | #13 The Guardian | #18 MOJO | #18 NME  
#18 Time Out London | #24 Q Magazine | #25 The Telegraph | #45  
Uncut | #35 Juice Nothing

**19 May 2014**

**UK Hip Hop**

**Produced by Dan Carey**

**Label: Big Dada**

**48:31**

While the aggressively heavy beats on *Everybody Down* deserve their own merit, it's undoubtedly Tempest's well-crafted lyrics and bold delivery which dominates this intense trip. With her primary strength lying in spoken word poetry, this album presents some of the sharpest verses of 2014, consciously spitting a smart narrative focused upon the hardships of modern Britain, complete with commonplace circumstances, relatable characters, and the exact situational dialogue you hear every day on these UK streets. Like a film, it demands your

full attention to dig through the thick sound in order to accurately grasp the fast-paced plot, but when you do, you'll discover a talent so fresh that any future Tempest records will have automatically earned your instant attention. And as this book goes on, you might find you were right to do so...

**“Everybody Down might have created a new genre: the album noir.”**

**— Clash Music**

NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS

GHOSTEEN

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**NICK CAVE AND THE BAD SEEDS**  
**GHOSTEEN**

## End of Year Lists

#1 MOJO | #1 The Skinny | #2 Treble | #2 Uncut | #10 BBC Radio 6  
Music | #15 Paste | #20 Consequence of Sound | #22 Uproxx | #26  
Rough Trade | #27 Piccadilly Records | #16 Juice Nothing

**4 October 2019**  
**Ambient Chamber Pop**  
**Produced by Nick Cave & Warren Ellis**  
**Label: Bad Seed Ltd.**  
**68:10**

The gradual progression of Cave's last three albums have been a natural evolution towards a rather strange sound indeed, but the true eeriness of *Ghosteen* is directly connected to the earlier tragedies made famous by 2016's *Skeleton Tree*. Here we have a definite sequel to that previous mourning, one which has swallowed the former and grown immensely larger in size; a softer, calmer, slower, more monotone continuation which has finally found a hopeful almost spiritual peace after the neurotic anxiety which agonised the music before. And while these pieces

are long and the music is, at times, basically non-existent, Cave's biteless voice and lyrical drive have never sounded better. In a rare modern example, Nick's legacy is already a permanent fixture in the history books since forever, and this endless strew of latter-day classics are only building an eternal empire now.

***“Ghosteen is an almost supernaturally wonderful record. It is, perhaps, the ultimate Nick Cave album, yet somehow unlike anything he has done before.”***

**— Under The Radar**



**175**

**DEATH GRIPS  
BOTTOMLESS PIT**

## End of Year Lists

#3 The Needle Drop | #24 Earbuddy | #24 Pretty Much Amazing  
#42 FasterLouder | #43 Gigwise | #50 Rolling Stone | #30 Juice  
Nothing

**6 May 2016**

**Experimental Industrial Abstract Hip Hop**

**Produced by Death Grips**

**Label: Third Worlds | Harvest**

**39:20**

*Bottomless Pit is exactly what you've ordered from a Death Grips record, except a full force lethal intravenous dose of it: the untamed aggressive noise, the raw turbulent chaos, and the unsociable disorderly violence, except even more fixated this round, intensified into a crude prison weapon designed to murder you whilst they strangle themselves at the same time. Which is a total return to form, the outfit sounding as hungry as ever with an even bigger jaw, finally tearing at the itchy infection Money Store left behind, exhausted by punky carnival*

*beats that are as abrasive as they intelligently polished then mercilessly intimidated by MC Ride's signature assaults. They are probably the most exciting group to come out of the whole decade, and this hits as one of the greatest of their greatest.*

***“The best release from one of the most exciting artists of the 2010s.”***

***— Pretty Much Amazing***



J U A N A M O L I N A



**174**

**JUANA MOLINA**

**WED 21**

## End of Year Lists

#42 *The Wire* | #42 NPR Music | #12 *Juice Nothing*

**29 October 2013**  
**Folk-Indietronica**  
**Produced by Juana Molina**  
**Label: Crammed Discs**  
**53:00**

*Like the naivety of some twisted nightmare in the brain of a little Spanish child, this album feels as if it is completely oblivious to everything around it, lightly fumbling with its sounds then dropping them, mixing the order up, it made a mistake, let's hope nobody noticed. And in this kiddie-like manner, it's scary without intending to be and deliriously peculiar without realising it. And you know what else? It's enjoying every minute of its own death, delicately skipping over a warped path, only confused by the intrigue of observers who call it out on its oddness. It's just*

*being itself. It's having fun within this druggy disorientation. Leave it alone.*

***“Wed 21 continues the intrigue, amplifies the obsession, and is 2013’s most addictive and compelling album made by anyone anywhere. I have no end-of-year list. Just Wed 21.”***

***— The Quietus***

TROPHY SCARS  
HOLY VACANTS



**173**

**TROPHY SCARS**  
**HOLY VACANTS**

## End of Year Lists

*#4 Sputnikmusic | #6 Juice Nothing*

**8 April 2014**  
**Post-Hardcore Blues Rock**  
**Produced by Chris Badami**  
**Label: Monotreme**  
**55:35**

*Holy Vacants is the audio equivalent of a drunk patron sobbing at the bar, slurring about where it all went wrong and then smashing their glass into the face of the eavesdropper who called them a crybaby. It's a powerful assault driven by insecurities, vulnerable yet unafraid of a deadly brawl if it so comes to it. And how they've achieved this contradiction of moods is no secret: it's the vocal harmonising. The girlie girl (prettier, cleaner, more beautiful) meets the manly man (grittier, masculine, raw), using the stereotypes of gender roles as tools rather than something to*

*shun from. Now watch as this couple up are lifted by stainless production, allowing each instrument to grant one another space whilst leaving no elbow room for anything else whatsoever. Now listen. It sounds like a classic.*

***“The best parts of classic rock find a home in Holy Vacants without ever seeming forced.”***

**— Sputnikmusic**



**172**

**SZA**

**CTRL** ITAL  
**ADVISORY**  
**EXPLICIT CONTENT**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Associated Press | #1 New York Daily News | #1 Noisey | #1 Time  
#1 Vinyl Me, Please | #2 BBC News | #2 BET | #2 Billboard | #2  
BrooklynVegan | #2 Cosmopolitan | #2 Dazed | #2 Esquire (US) | #2  
NPR Music | #2 Pigeons & Planes | #2 Pitchfork | #40 Juice Nothing*

**9 June 2017**

**Alternative R&B**

**Produced by Anthony “Top Dawg” Tiffith**

**Label: Top Dawg | RCA**

**49:01**

Some 200 songs composed plus countless delays later, and big-name guest writer SZA finally rewarded our patience with her debut record, thank you for waiting, here you go: a relaxed collection of soulful downtempo jams, musically refined to lean into the background as mere passive decorations, allowing her sensual vocals and intimate reflections to dominate the centre stage. And dominate, they do. They really really do, with freestyled sincerity, standing tall without being combative about it whilst proving that vulnerability does not

necessarily equate to powerlessness. Perhaps she’s still working out her artistic place in the world, but this uncertainty may work in her favour as an indication that there are much bigger things ahead for this already surprisingly big star.

**“SZA’s knack for marrying her assorted tastes into an intriguing sound is her strong suit, and coupled with her distinct vocal and songwriting abilities, she comes across here as a consummate artist.”**

**— Exclaim!**



**171**

**SANTIGOLD**  
**MASTERS OF MY MAKE-BELIEVE**

## End of Year Lists

#3 Slant | #10 SPIN | #22 Complex | #30 Exclaim! | #37 AllMusic  
#39 Gigwise | #74 PopMatters | #24 Juice Nothing

**23 April 2012**  
**Electropop Indietronica**  
**Produced by Santigold**  
**Label: Atlantic | Downtown**  
**37:45**

This is a fight album to me. It is a determined momentum mowing through the general indie/pop surrounding it, throwing so many streetwise hooks that only a trail of blood is left behind. Even the mellow tracks feel like the inevitable regret one might feel after beating the shit out of everything, allowing oneself a sit down to reflect on what has just been done. We could talk about the excess of 2012 anthems on here, or how Santigold uses her limited vocals in such an inventive ways, or how she managed to get Karen O to feature, or how she overwhelmingly

outshone Karen O on that same song (a feat no one has ever achieved before) but what I really want to talk about is punching you in your face again.

***“I would place this album among the strongest work coming out in both the realms of indie and pop music these days, and though it may not inspire the level of critical and popular veneration that her first album enjoyed, it’s a welcome return by one of the most inventive and inspired recording artists working today.”***

**— PopMatters**





**No Home Record**  
Kim Gordon

**170**

**KIM GORDON**  
**NO HOME RECORD**

## End of Year Lists

#20 *The Quietus* | #32 *Uncut* | #42 *Drift* | #89 *Rough Trade* | #15  
*Juice Nothing*

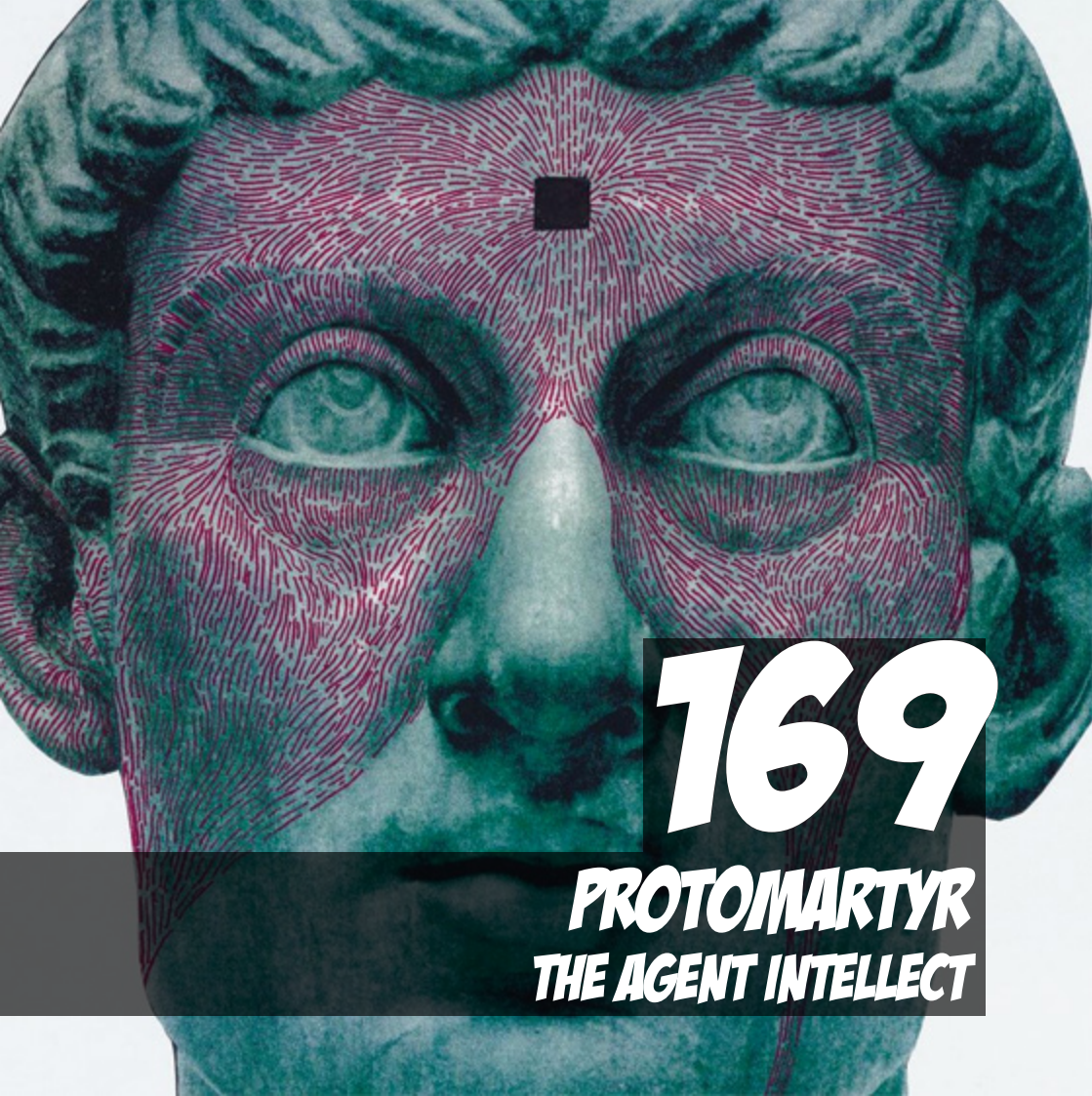
**11 October 2019**  
**Post-Industrial Noise Rock**  
**Produced by Justin Raisen**  
**Label: Matador**  
**39:20**

After exorcising her abrasively experimental artistic urges through *Body/Head*, our wait had finally come to an end right here. A rock legend above rock legends, one who had been in the game for almost four decades, eventually took the leap and gifted us with her debut solo album. In some ways, it was the record we always knew Kim would eventually make, except she not only took her time to do so but she also did it her own way with an unpredictably catchy electro-industrial flavour added in with her usual punk rock ideals. Which is exactly the type of

strange move Gordon would make! That's so Gordon! And, what's more, it's probably the best record from any Sonic Youth member other than actual Sonic Youth records, so eat that, Thurston!

***“Little about the album feels predictable, neither the musical texture nor the oblique and sometimes imagistic lyrics. Gordon can be startling at times, and she does it all with a cool (a non-commercial, unreproducible cool, that is) that, as much as anything, makes No Home Record so particular to Gordon.”***

**— Dusted Magazine**



**169**

**PROTOMARTYR  
THE AGENT INTELLECT**

## End of Year Lists

#11 A.V. Club | #12 Paste | #13 Consequence of Sound | #13 No Ripcord | #17 PopMatters | #20 SPIN | #22 Treble | #26 Loud and Quiet | #34 Pretty Much Amazing | #75 Under the Radar | #30 Juice Nothing

**9 October 2015**

**Post-Punk**

**Produced by Bill Skibbe**

**Label: Hardly Art**

**44:11**

*In a decade where we had an excess of good post-punk to fill the bucket, it became even more of an impressive act when a band took this popular route yet still managed to make a louder sound than the competition. How Protomartyr achieved their own personal victory is explicitly stated in the very title, as it is their resilient intellect which rises them within the pack, revealing a meditated fixation on forcing the grittiest of slurry monotone poetic musings directly into your belly. And once they are inside of you, they derange your innards, provoking a nauseating*

*discomfort which begs to escape your stomach whilst introducing a memory so fierce that they won't be escaping your mind whatsoever.*

***“It starts with a slow drip and builds to a raging flood. It’s irresistible and so eloquently convincing that despite their claims of failure, Protomartyr are unstoppable.”***

**— DIY Magazine**



**168**

**M.I.A.  
MATANGI**

**PARENTAL  
ADVISORY  
EXPLICIT CONTENT**

## End of Year Lists

#10 Idolator | #10 TIME | #11 Spin | #12 NME | #15 Clash | #24  
Paste | #26 Piegons & Planes | #32 Complex | #46 Pitchfork | #47  
Rolling Stone | #23 Juice Nothing

**5 November 2013**

**UK Hip Hop Electropop**

**Produced by Hit-Boy | The Partysquad | Sugu | Switch**

**Label: N.E.E.T. | Interscope**

**57:16**

It seems fair to argue that M.I.A. isn't always conscious of her strong points and yet, at the same time, it seems unlikely that she cares. Her scatty lyrics are as socially conscious as they are often laughable but they always enslave the hardcore beats to work for her, everything exploding restlessly, banging out messy and exciting colours, artistically abrasive and exhaustingly eccentric with almost too much force for one LP. For these very reasons, many critics turned their heads away, stating that the lady was too inventive/awkwardly hardcore/chaotically flawed for her

own good, unaware that they were the first reviewers to fall directly into her trap. Because, whether you can handle it or not, you're describing something that no one else is doing. Not like this anyway. Not even close.

***“Her child-like rhymes may seem like she’s only toying with playground politics but she knows exactly where her strengths are; Matangi is a tribute to those talents and it’s an unmitigated thrill. Dissident, deviant, “mili-tent”; Cookie cutter pop star she is not, but a true great she absolutely is.”***

**— The Line of Best Fit**



## End of Year Lists

#19 Amazon | #17 Juice Nothing

**7 June 2010**

**Pop**

**Produced by Greg Kurstin**

**Label: Monkey Puzzle | RCA**

**46:23**

Strange but true, *We Are Born* can work as a therapy piece. It addresses your inner turmoils without lowering itself to your level, instead opting to use its party hooks to bounce your vibrations up to high speeds, keeping the conversation fun and punchy throughout whilst still remaining very aware of the human issues and keeping a keen eye on your emotions. It is heartbreak in the summertime, a life-lesson discovered in candyfloss, words of encouragement coming from a smile attached to one of the most impressive pop songwriters and singing voices of the decade—

just read her resume, it's insane. So if you wish to dismiss this as a guilty pleasure, then by all means, go ahead. But what an absolute pleasure it is all the same.

**“On *We Are Born* the chanteuse explores more caffeinated avenues...It’s party music with a heart.”**

**— Entertainment Weekly**



M A R I N E R

**166**

***CULT OF LUNA AND JULIE  
CHRISTMAS  
MARINER***

**End of Year Lists**

*#31 Decibel | #12 Juice Nothing*

**8 April 2016**  
**Atmospheric Sludge Post-Metal**  
**Produced by Andrew Schneider**  
**Label: Indie Recordings**  
**54:34**

Whoever's idea this album was had some genius creative foresight. They probably calculated that the masculinity of your standard Cult of Luna effort could benefit from a more feminine injection, stabilizing the typical machoness of the genre with an opposition that complements with conflixtions. However, what I doubt anybody could have predicted was just how much Julie Christmas was going to dominate this entire record. Her heavenly vocals coarse through the dramatic wall of sound only to rupture everything surrounding her with high pitched

screams so wickedly violent that her male counterparts cower in her presence. As a result, it's an album so perfectly balanced that you might blissfully vomit on yourself or carry out a bloodthirsty attack on the people around you, literally anything could happen.

**“This is an album that guides you from start to finish on the backs of monster riffs, gargantuan vocals and a sense of sonic superiority that is going to leave you in awe. Cult Of Luna and Julie Christmas have just unleashed some of the best work of their respective careers here.”**

**— Metal Injection**



End of Year Lists

*#8 Juice Nothing*

**17 September 2010**  
**Abstract Experimental Industrial Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Uochi Toki**  
**Label: La Tempesta**  
**68:22**

Whether you understand Italian or not, this is yet another example of how one is not required to comprehend a single word of an album to acknowledge the genius churning beneath. Meet Uochi Toki, an underappreciated hip hop crew whose selling point is that the fast hardcore raps and the industrial sample-heavy backings appear to work independently, almost as if they were written apart, completely unrelated, then slapped together at the end because, I dunno, whatever. But it works! Albeit with some jarring moments so dark that your mother

probably wouldn't enjoy it very much. Maybe you wouldn't either, come to think of it. But at least you'll admit that they're doing what so few do, and what's more, they're doing it better.

***“Even an unfinished and imperfect record like this remains one of those trips that are worth a thousand of the other useless stuff you listen to.”***

**— *Storia della musica***



**164**

**LA DISPUTE  
PANORAMA**



**End of Year Lists**

*#14 Juice Nothing*

**22 March 2019**  
**Post-Hardcore Emo**  
**Produced by Will Yip**  
**Label: Epitaph**  
**41:52**

What's fascinating about *Panorama* is how the band appears to be evolving further away from the post-hardcore sound that they have become synonymous with... except for the vocals which remain their ever passionate poetic selves, standing alone as *La Dispute's* signature factor, simultaneously holding the evolution back while ensuring they don't lose grip of what it is that made them one of the greatest outfits on the planet in the first place. And it is somewhere between these pushes and pulls that they've hatched their most instantaneously likeable record

yet; still heavy, still soft, and still neither, just a collection where every song states its case so successfully that one could even call this their greatest effort without too much argument from either side.

***“La Dispute are titans of their scene, but they’re also lyricists of the highest calibre, writing songs many will confide in.”***

**— The Skinny**



## End of Year Lists

#1 The Needle Drop | #2 The Line of Best Fit | #3 FACT | #3 Loud and Quiet | #3 PopMatters | #5 Passion of the Weiss | #7 BrooklynVegan | #7 GIGsoup | #9 Tiny Mix Tapes | #9 Treble | #10 BLARE | #10 Earbuddy | #10 Stereogum | #11 Pitchfork | #33 Juice Nothing

**30 September 2016**  
**Experimental Hardcore Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Paul White**  
**Label: Fool's Gold | Warp**  
**46:38**

*Atrocity Exhibition* sounds just like the artwork is telling you. It's a horror-comedy on a damaged VHS tape, a kooky quirkiness over nightmarish aggression, unhinged and delusional, losing sanity and ready to hurt you in the weirdest of ways possible. I guess this is what happens when real talent no longer has any fear for his art, but has fear inside of his art itself, still leading the way with the most recognisably nasal voice in the game, but now tortured into some hookless obscurity, testing the long term fans who stuck to his comical history by alienating them

into a world of abnormal panic. Are you into this type of thing? Then step sideways, please.

***“As an album, it is both as lovably outrageous as Danny Brown, but also as menacing and impenetrable as his city is. Ultimately, it is this duality that makes *Atrocity Exhibition* the masterpiece it is.”***

**— PopMatters**





**162**  
**THE HAXAN CLOAK**  
**EXCAVATION**

E X C A V A T I O N

## End of Year Lists

#14 Resident Advisor | #14 Spin | #14 The Quietus | #16 XLR8R  
#17 eMusic | #18 Bleep | #29 Pitchfork | #40 Paste | #40 The  
Needle Drop | #46 Consequence of Sound | #50 Crack Magazine  
#62 PopMatters | #82 musicOMH | #55 Juice Nothing

**15 April 2013**

**Dark Ambient Dub**

**Produced by The Haxan Cloak**

**Label: Tri Angle Records**

**51:34**

*The only disappointing element of Haxan Cloak's sophomore effort is that it yearns to be accompanied by visuals which simply aren't available. This is because *Excavation* is, unquestionably, a horror soundtrack for the most terrifying flick which simply does not exist, and that sucks. The roles between the music and the listener are confused while these soundscapes pester you with creepy atmospheres which wash through your soul like malicious waves, using fluctuating throbs to sync to your heartbeat until your biology is no longer in control. And, yeah, it's scary.*

*Even better is this record's aftertaste, which lingers for an eternity, the artwork alone resurrecting traumatic memories no matter how much time has passed after the final spin has stilled. And I feel weird.*

***“Ultimately, what makes *Excavation* such an awesome and absorbing listen is precisely its indifference to the listener.”***

**— Spin**



DARK TIME  
**ANX**  
SUNSHINE

**161**

***DARK TIME SUNSHINE***  
***ANX***

End of Year Lists

*#19 Juice Nothing*

**24 July 2012**  
**Abstract Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Zavala**  
**Label: Fake Four Inc.**  
**51:39**

*In what can only be described as “heavenly hip hop”, this release unifies polished production from outer space with intelligently relaxed flows, both working together to point out the light at the end of the tunnel without ignoring the tunnel itself. It may be positive, but it’s not naive. It’s on your side, but it’s not going to go easy on you. It’ll show you the door, but it won’t walk through it for you. It might not have all the answers, but it knows the next step. Basically put, it’s just as their name suggests. There will be some dark times. But there will also be some sunshine. And*

*on a personal note, it makes me sick how overlooked this album is because I wake up with these songs stuck in my head on an almost daily basis.*

**“ANX matures as a follow-up and pushes the envelope of contemporary music in every way, combining influences as diverse as dream-pop, trip-hop, psychedelia, indie rock, and others all under the ever-broadening tag of hip-hop.”**

**— Sputnikmusic**



LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

THIS IS HAPPENING

160

LCD SOUNDSYSTEM  
THIS IS HAPPENING

## End of Year Lists

#1 No Ripcord | #1 Paste | #1 Rhapsody SoundBoard | #1 The Needle Drop | #1 Treble | #2 NOW Magazine | #2 Pitchfork | #3 Time | #4 A.V. Club | #4 NME | #4 Spin | #5 Amazon | #6 Billboard | #6 DIY  
#6 musicOMH | #27 Juice Nothing

**18 May 2010**

**Indietronica Dance-Punk**

**Produced by James Murphy**

**Label: DFA | Virgin | Parlophone**

**65:17**

This is Happening excels at a personal post-punk style which is located within a unique electronic groove, one special place where almost anyone from whatever musical background can meet up and shake hands and share a dance with a nostalgic self-awareness, not even bothered what their friends may or may not think. But, wait, is this happening? According to almost every critic with a pen in 2010, this was most certainly happening, the skies raining infinite praise upon James Murphy for going out on a career all-time-high as this record

came packaged with his grand announcement of early retirement. Of course, he came crawling back seven years later which not everyone was quite as happy about, but what can you do? Just keep listening to this record, I suppose.

**“James Murphy absolutely crushes the follow up, placing him on the shortlist of artists that truly matter.”**

**— Under The Radar**



**159**

**CLIPPING.  
MIDCITY**

**End of Year Lists**

*#7 The Needle Drop | #27 Juice Nothing*

**5 February 2013**

**Experimental Industrial Hip Hop**

**Produced by William Hutson, Jonathan Snipes**

**Label: Self-released**

**48:34**

While the rap flows are fast and smart, it is the music itself which stands taller; an onslaught so violently jarring that I'm not even sure you could call it music whatsoever. Annoying frequencies ache your eardrums whilst melody-less distortion erodes your headphones like a baseball bat to the teeth. It toys with the line between sampling and torture, which breaks heavier than most metal you'll hear this decade, the word "stressful" nowhere near a strong enough description. And yet, it's not only noise. In fact, the true attack is crouching beneath

the jagged surface, and after enough listens, you'll come face-to-face with a premeditated intelligence, eager to meet you with sharp smiles and slanted eyes—and that takes an insane amount of talent to pull off. What's more, never has a band name been so fitting.

**"Midcity is exciting stuff, not only because forces open the doors even wider for risk-taking and experimentation in hip-hop, but because of the skill and energy that it displays in doing so."**

**— Tiny Mix Tapes**





## End of Year Lists

#1 Clash #1 Mashable #1 NPR Mus | #1 Pitchfork | #1 SPIN | #1  
The 405 | #1 The Vinyl Factory | #2 Crack Magazine | #2 Dazed | #2  
FasterLouder | #2 Fuse | #2 Idolator | #2 Nerdist | #2 Noisey | #2  
Now Magazine | #36 Juice Nothing

**30 September 2016**

**Neo-Soul**

**Produced by Solange | Raphael Saadiq**

**Label: Saint | Columbia**

**50:48**

Solange's very surname is a curse but with *A Seat at the Table*, Little Knowles proved herself as a talent independent of her family ties. For here was an album fearlessly protesting against the historical and modern-day oppression against her race whilst ensuring that she never loses her cool like so many tend to do, opting to do her very best to explain herself as coherently as possible, spread over luscious beats and an unobtrusive restraint, void of any loud explosions. It's not here to start a fight or even a debate. Rather, it's here to calmly address a current

social issue which is immediately relevant and extremely important in this current political climate, giving all of us plenty to think about.

***“Though at times it rages, it also rebukes division and seeks dialogue. In the same way black art is enriched by its complicated history, *A Seat at the Table* shines due to Knowles’ unwavering commitment to her own complexity, both musically and personally.”***

**— Pretty Much Amazing**



**157**

**THE NATIONAL  
TROUBLE WILL FIND ME**

### End of Year Lists

#2 Listen Before You Buy | #3 Gigwise | #3 musicOMH | #4 A.V. Club | #4 Bleep | #5 MAGNET | #5 Pretty Much Amazing | #6 American Songwriter | #6 BBC Radio 6 Music | #8 Rolling Stone | #8 Slant | #9 Amazon | #25 Juice Nothing

**21 May 2013**

**Indie Rock**

**Produced by Aaron & Bryce Dessner**

**Label: 4AD**

**55:06**

The National are one of this era's greatest bands, which is why, if any other group had made this album, it would be their greatest work. But The National made it. And, simply put, it's not their greatest work. They played it safe and it's void of any surprises, but then again, can we blame them? They've stuck to their strengths, all lightly romantic and subtly cold and shit, and as a result, this is the first time the band has sounded so comfortable and relaxed within themselves. So go on and give off a long sigh for all of the right reasons. For loss and despair. For the

melancholy and the tragedy and the pessimism that comes with wisdom, leaving everyone else behind as they question how exhausting it must be to feel so sad all of the time.

**“Like the rest of the National catalog, *Trouble Will Find Me* is subtly insinuating; at first it seems almost free of hooks, then six listens later it's difficult to get it unstuck.”**

**— The A.V. Club**

LAURA MVULA



**156**

**LAURA MVULA**  
**SING TO THE MOON**

## End of Year Lists

#16 Q Magazine | #19 MOJO | #24 eMusic | #55 musicOMH | #89  
The Quietus | #89 NPR Music | #11 Juice Nothing

**4 March 2013**

**Contemporary R&B Chamber Pop**

**Produced by Steve Brown**

**Label: RCA Victor**

**49:36**

*Sing to the Moon is a careful composition of sweetly warm melodies, solely designed to surround and uplift much larger moments of soaring emotions, which may be a tried and tested formula yet is hardly ever executed this perfectly. And together, we march daintily on our tip-toes whilst blasting out our soulful sing-a-longs throughout a landscape of cheeky art-weirdness, each verse sparkling full of positivity thanks to a shimmering production and a satisfying song ordering which uses logical steps to ensure a comfortable ride all the way until*

*the very end. For a debut to feel so complete and filler-free does nothing but place Laura nice and high up on the map as a figure to keep both ears on.*

***“Whether as the fanfare arrival of a unique new voice or the peculiar indulgence of a future cult classic, this is an album that has to be heard to be believed.”***

**— BBC**



## End of Year Lists

#2 Okayplayer | #3 The Needle Drop | #4 PopMatters | #6 The 405  
#7 Rough Trade | #8 The Guardian | #8 The Wire | #9 CraveOnline  
#10 Pitchfork | #10 Slant Magazine | #16 Treble | #17 Paste | #18  
Sputnikmusic | #19 Time Out London | #20 Juice Nothing

**5 May 2015**  
**Spiritual Jazz**  
**Produced by Kamasi Washington**  
**Label: Brainfeeder**  
**173:36**

To call your album *The Epic* is a bold move, but somehow, Washington's major-label debut lives up to its name completely. How it achieves such a monumental feat may have something to do with its borderline three-fucking-hour long runtime, which, honestly, is a bit too much to ask anyone, as even the biggest jazz junkies may find their tolerance boundaries nudged and exhausted. Thankfully, Kamasi has the credentials to back up such a challenge, keeping the ride smooth and casually sexy, building up into chaotic climaxes of improv solos

and soaring backgrounds, spicing the traditional with a modern flavour, and ultimately handing out a surprisingly lively and listenable record, impossibly maintaining your interest over such an intimidatingly preposterous length. Good job!

***“The big news is that *The Epic* actually makes good on its titular promise without bothering to make even a faint-hearted stab in the direction of fulfilling its pre-release hype.”***

**— Pitchfork**





D'ANGELO  
AND THE  
VANGUARD  
BLACK  
MESSIAH

**154**

**D'ANGELO AND THE VANGUARD  
BLACK MESSIAH**

**End of Year Lists**

#1 Pazz & Jop | #2 Pretty Much Amazing | #3 Treble | #4 Rolling Stone | #5 Complex | #7 Consequence of Sound | #7 Grantland (Steven Hyden) | #7 Pitchfork | #8 Billboard | #10 CraveOnline | #11 Crack Magazine | #11 The Needle Drop | #12 Flavorwire | #16 MOJO

**15 December 2014**  
**Neo-Soul**  
**Produced by D'Angelo**  
**Label: RCA**  
**55:54**

How much does D'Angelo not care what you think? Enough to drop his album a few days after all of the 2014 end-of-year lists had already been shipped, doing so with zero promotion or even announcements behind its title. What a ballsy move this is, especially considering that *Black Messiah* was only the artist's third record—not to mention his first in 14 years—leaving his current relevance under heavy question, nobody certain if there was enough a space in the market for this artist anymore. Well, one person was certain. D'Angelo! And, what's more,

dude was right, as this sexy craft was delivered on fire and everyone's hands got burned, forcing them to agree that they all wanted to go back and change those lists they published earlier on. I know I desperately did but this will have to do.

***“This is the Second Coming of D'Angelo, not a close second, but a continuation of that lineage. We've waited fifteen years for his finest album to date.”***

**— Pretty Much Amazing**



# 153

**SIGUR ROS**  
**KVEIKUR**

## End of Year Lists

#16 CraveOnline | #20The 405 | #29 musicOMH | #30 Obscure  
Sound | #30 Rough Trade | #32 Urban Outfitters | #36 Gigwise  
#45 Q Magazine | #30 Juice Nothing

**14 June 2013**  
**Post-Art Rock**  
**Produced by Sigur Rós**  
**Label: XL**  
**48:22**

When Valtari dropped in 2012, it felt as if Sigur Rós' signature heavenly sound had now fallen down into the mid-career crisis that so many bands tend to do around this point. But *Kveikur... Kveikur!...* proved this to be oh-so untrue. It punched its way right out of the rut, digging gritty claws into intestines, now demanding attention upfront rather than painting some mysteriously hazy pictures into the background. It finally shed the calculated day-dreaming in favour of some good old compact instincts, an animal as dark and as scary as Sigur Rós could

muster without losing their beautiful dramatic signatures, rubbing skin raw then polishing the wound, knocking their last album out of the way like child's play. And no other band could make this record.

***“Kveikur is the band’s noisiest and most muscular record yet. The variety of experience it offers not just from Valtari, but from the band’s entire catalogue, means that it stands among their best.”***

**— Beats Per Minute**

# MALIBU

ANDERSON . PAAK



# 152

**ANDERSON . PAAK**  
**MALIBU**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Gaffa (Sweden) | #1 KCRW | #1 Red Bull | #2 GIGsoup | #2 Pigeons & Planes | #2 Rough Trade | #2 The Independent | #3 Gaffa (Norway) | #4 OOR | #4 The Skinny | #5 Albumism | #5 Variety | #6 Hypebeast | #6 LA Music Blog | #6 Salon | #16 Juice Nothing

15 January 2016

Neo Soul

Produced by Adrian L. Miller

Label: ArtClub | Empire | OBE | Steel Wool

61:02

Shining with life and grooving with sleek, it's difficult to think of an album more "of the times" than Malibu. It's a summary piece so current yet educated that it comes across like some black music history lesson, blending soul and R&B with mellow hip hop flows taken straight from the Butterfly textbook. It's polished off with such a hyper-precise production value that active listening presents infinitely rewarding details, yet passive listening still glides along as a carefree undisrupted journey—perhaps a tad lengthy, but benefiting all perseverance by delivering some

of its best knocks towards the very end. Stomach these rarities along with the man's countless decade guest slots, and agree that if the ever-elusive crown actually existed, Paak holds a piece from it.

**"Paak's got the musicianship down to a science. Now it's clear he's working on what his music feels like."**

**— Pretty Much Amazing**

DEFTONES

KOI NO YOKAN

**151**  
**DEFTONES**  
**KOI NO YOKAN**

**End of Year Lists**

*#42 DIY | #44 SPIN | #16 Juice Nothing*

**13 November 2012**  
**Alternative Metal**  
**Produced by Nick Raskulinecz**  
**Label: Reprise**  
**51:50**

Deftones are unquestionably one of the few longstanding rock-y bands who can boast a long yet flawless discography of great records, and *Koi No Yokan* is a great example of exactly how they maintain this. And it's as simple as this: they respect their listeners. They are a group who focus on keeping their work experimentally inventive without ever alienating their core fans, a compact stop-start momentum of powerfully meaty riffs coated with lovingly melodic emotions to cross off every item of the to-do list time and time again. And while all of their

90s peers have faded into ludicrous obscurity, Deftones have not only held their heads above water but have learned how to walk on the stuff, now living as modern legends who've already signed the metal history books in ink, if you know how to read.

***“This fit and lean version of Deftones have turned negativity into vibrant positivity and channelled it into their cohesive and textured seventh full-length, *Koi No Yokan*--a record that will forever sit high upon Deftones’ burgeoning list of impressive achievements.”***

**— PopMatters**





## End of Year Lists

#3 Cosmopolitan | #8 Gigwise | #10 TIME | #10 Vibe | #11 Passion of the Weiss | #11 PopMatters | #14 Pazz & Jop | #15 Complex | #15 FasterLouder | #16 Flavorwire | #21 Vulture | #25 Pitchfork | #32 Wondering Sound | #24 Juice Nothing

**8 November 2014**  
**East Coast Hip Hop House**  
**Produced by Azealia Banks**  
**Label: Prospect Park | Caroline**  
**60:19**

After five years of production and a two-year delay, many had lost faith in this debut's arrival and, in turn, the lady herself. So when this album suddenly dropped without any direct marketing or predetermined release date, the music world froze until it caught fire, applauding this eclectic and confident work as not only the Azealia we were always promised (aggressive yet playful) but also the one we weren't (less hardcore and way more dancey). And throughout this lengthy runtime, Banks continuously delivered an excitingly versatile style where clean

singing and fierce shouting in various voices was fueled by clever wordplay, glueing together an intense rhyming skill and finally biting as hard as she had been barking online, disproving that 212 "one-hit-wonder" curse we'd all shamefully uttered once or twice.

***"It's a kaleidoscope of sounds that feels like a best of instead of a debut. It's jarringly airy, flitting about and flouting conventions at every turn, and it's sometimes so steeped in it's 90s house past that it undermines its own velocity."***

**— HipHopDX**



**149**

**3776**  
**SALIKI**

## End of Year Lists

*#13 Juice Nothing*

**28 August 2019**  
**Progressive Art Pop**  
**Produced by Akira Ishida**  
**Label: Natural Make**  
**73:12**

*With mere months to spare before the decade closed its doors, it'd be understandable if you thought we'd run out of surprise shots, but you'd also be WRONG. Presenting 3776, an experimental Japanese outfit whose entire brand concept revolves around the 3,776m high Mount Fuji, for some strange reason, I'm sure. And much like the aforementioned mountain, this album is a monumental journey of note. It's a long and testing climb but it's never boring, forever bursting with tricky moments which build higher and higher upon itself, careful to never put a single foot wrong*

*because, if you do, you'll fall and die. It's a record which does absolutely everything in such quirky excess that it's basically gone mad from a lack of oxygen and anyone who tries to accurately critique this will probably end up a little insane too, hence why I'm going back to bed, bye.*

***“Saijiki is a preposterous undertaking that would never have seemed like a worthwhile or even necessarily feasible idea if she hadn't shot for it, and you can take it or leave it on those terms. Part of me never wants to hear this album again; part of me doesn't want to listen to anything else.”***

**— Sputnik Music**

CIGARETTES AFTER SEX

**148**

***CIGARETTES AFTER SEX***  
***CIGARETTES AFTER SEX***

### End of Year Lists

*#6 Rough Trade | #10 Les Inrocks | #11 The Wild Honey Pie | #20  
OOR | #21 Q Magazine | #21 The Guardian | #26 The Independent  
#32 Clash | #32 No Ripcord | #37 Norman Records | #39 Drowned  
in Sound | #43 The Line of Best Fit | #15 Juice Nothing*

**9 June 2017**  
**Dream Pop Slowcore**  
**Produced by Greg Gonzalez**  
**Label: Partisan**  
**46:56**

The most common routine disagreement you'll hear concerning this record is its effortless repetition, barren of any variation, essentially the identical minimal ambience performed over and over and over again. But it is within this bland yet uncommon maturity, so indifferent to contemporary flash, that the dignified magic sleeps, wholly aware of its monotonous risk but exploiting your lethargy to comfortably lull you into a slow-motion empathy of harmless melancholy. It's a piece of thoughtfully soft intimacy which requests nocturnal seclusion, quietly

conversing about smokey romances and sexual subtleties; a smile only visible below a pair of sad eyes, gently pouring two glasses of wine, one for itself, and one for your sedated soul. No doubt that this colourless tone will overstay its welcome one day, but not today.

**“Cigarettes After Sex are the stuff of late night drives, old black-and-white films, and prolonged hedonistic reveries worth revisiting again and again.”**

**— PopMatters**



# 147

**DENZEL CURRY**

**TA1300**

MENTAL  
ADVISORY  
EXPLICIT CONTENT

## End of Year Lists

#14 *The Needle Drop* | #16 *Sputnikmusic* | #25 *BrooklynVegan*  
#29 *Complex* | #31 *Far Out Magazine* | #31 *Vinyl Me, Please* | #40  
*DJBooth (Hip Hop / R&B)* | #44 *Stereogum* | #45 *Consequence of  
Sound* | #30 *Juice Nothing*

**July 27 2018**  
**Southern Trap Hip Hop**  
**Produced by FnZ**  
**Label: PH | Loma Vista**  
**43:20**

With each album, Denzel has intentionally transitioned his direction, so guardedly that many didn't even catch the gradual incorporation of shameless commercialism until trap pop reached the forefront of his work and the masses smelt something fresh in the air. If he had started his catalogue with *Ta13oo*, would it have succeeded? Would we be having this conversation? Who's to say? However, once he'd acquired enough clout behind his name for it to become its own currency, his skill transferred smoothly into this

realm of higher profit, and it worked perfectly. More people started to take notice and considering the fast pacing of his uprising, it's only a matter of moments before Curry's underground bubblings froth over into the mainstream league. I mean, in certain circles, he already has. And he deserves it. He produces better trap rap than anyone.

***“His new LP is a sonic assault; holding tight to punk ruthlessness and discipline, drenched in Dirty South origins.”***

**— The Wire**



**146**

**JULIA HOLTER  
LOUD CITY SONG**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Sputnikmusic | #1 The Wire | #2 The Line of Best Fit | #3 Tiny Mix Tapes | #11 Obscure Sound | #12 Cokemachineglow | #12 Consequence of Sound | #14 No Ripcord | #15 Uncut | #18 The 405 | #22 The Needle Drop | #30 The Guardian | #19 Juice Nothing*

**20 August 2013**  
**Ambient Art Pop**  
**Produced by Cole M. Greif-Neill**  
**Label: Domino**  
**44:40**

*Loud City Song* draws you in as if a poem on a rainy day, presenting itself like a lonely observer rather than the main character in its own story. It's beautiful yet unusually uneasy; catchy yet without any commercial value; uncomfortable yet comforting; perfect yet vulnerable; soothing yet chaotic; a cradlesong horror; the growth of a dying plant in the snow; an amalgamation of contradictions without ever sounding like anything other than a direct and clear chill. But even when contemplating all of these orgasmic climaxes, nothing can take first place from Julia's voice

itself which is as haunting as a ghost stuck in her throat, rich and provoking while seducing the whole world with obscure hookless deliveries, leaving us all at the bottom of the puddle, utterly speechless and gasping for air like a stupid fish.

***“Like any new city, this album may take some getting used to--there's beauty everywhere, but the streets are far from a neat grid. But as you walk them, Holter's genius as a sonic town planner reveals itself.”***

**— Uncut**

CHARLI XCX



145

CHARLI XCX  
TRUE ROMANCE

T R U E R O M A N C E

## End of Year Lists

#6 Idolator | #18 Gorilla vs. Bear | #18 Slant | #20 Urban Outfitters  
#24 Amazon | #25 No Ripcord | #33 Pretty Much Amazing | #49  
Complex | #59 Under the Radar | #44 Juice Nothing

**15 April 2013**  
**Electro Synthpop**  
**Produced by Ariel Rechtshaid**  
**Label: Asylum | Atlantic**  
**47:02**

*Like a straight-A student fresh out of dance college, 21-year-old Charlotte has learned some things beyond the rest of her classmates, manifesting her debut project as a glorious guilty-pleasure smarty-pop album completely void of any cliché techniques to get her point across. And here we are, all dressed up and ready to go party. Feel free to compare her to literally any female pop star on the planet right now (and everyone already has) but you cannot hide from a record which stands tall with its own domineering personality, filled with enough excitement to*

*prick critical ears all around the interwebs, thirsty for whatever this girl has up her stockings next. And, as we know now, she had a lot. Ms XCX essentially took over the whole world by the time we were done.*

***“There isn’t a moment when Charli XCX doesn’t display the kind of wild, brash confidence that other artists take years to arrive at.”***

**— Tiny Mix Tapes**

4:44  
144  
JAY-Z  
4:44

## End of Year Lists

#1 The Ringer | #2 Complex | #2 Mass Appeal | #2 Rap-Up | #3 BET  
#3 Esquire (US) | #3 Fuse | #4 Associated Press | #4 Billboard | #4  
Philadelphia Inquirer | #5 Newsweek | #5 People | #5 Pigeons &  
Planes | #5 Slant Magazine | #6 Hypebeast | #71 Juice Nothing

**30 June 2017**  
**East Coast Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Jay-Z**  
**Label: Roc Nation**  
**36:11**

After Beyoncé tore open the chest of her marriage and let everyone take a peek inside, Jay-Z's infidelity was the central conversation and we all had something to say about it (mostly, "HE DID WHAT!"). It's only in fairness, then, that Jay got his chance with the mic and he took the opportunity to tell his side of the story with taste, helping each of us to come to terms with this wtf-ery by responding without defensiveness, rather confessing to his wrongdoings and apologising from a position of vulnerability—a place Jay is not known to stand in often. Couple

this emotional exposure with some rough-edged production, and we have a record that nobody thought Shawn Carter had left him. It's genuinely some of his best work.

***“Jay Z has always been the most grown up of rap stars but on this he reaches new heights. It’s a highly personal work bravely opening up the artis’s very human flaws as an example to others, locating in his own suffering a path towards forgiveness, redemption and, ultimately, a better world.”***

**— The Telegraph**

*mglta*



**143**

**MGLA**  
**EXERCISES IN FUTILITY**  
EXERCISES IN FUTILITY

## End of Year Lists

#14 Decibel | #40 Noisey | #72 Crack Magazine | #8 Juice Nothing

**4 September 2015**  
**Black Metal**  
**Produced by Mgła**  
**Label: Northern Heritage**  
**42:12**

It's not immediately apparent as to what sets this album so much higher than its contemporaries. The vocals, whilst vicious and grim, are fairly standard by stylistic comparison, and the music itself (bar the drummer's immensely exciting cymbal work) follows a steady black formula, relentlessly blast-beating the listener with stock misery rather than reinventing the art of homicide. However, the lower you explore, the more uniqueness you shall scrape up, in particular, the wide dynamics unveiled by the clearest of production, displaying a chaotic

catchiness stitching together their broken souls. What's more, Mgła don't collapse into a pathetic puddle of self-loathing either, rather exorcising their anguish to fuel an aggressive mission of despair, granting them a greater purpose which is a very dangerous thing for this genre to have.

***"It's rare to see two players so clearly meant for each other, and Mgła's accomplished performance on Futility transforms the lyrical content into a call to action. Great metal can harness strength from hopelessness; turning that strength into art is a blustering triumph."***

**— Pitchfork**





**142**

**LEONARD COHEN  
YOU WANT IT DARKER**

YOU WANT IT DARKER

## End of Year Lists

#2 Q Magazine | #3 Nerdist | #3 The Atlantic | #3 The Independent  
#4 Gigwise | #4 Northern Transmissions | #4 Uncut | #5 FLOOD  
#5 MOJO | #6 The Times The Sunday Times | #7 Albumism | #7 Les  
Inrocks | #8 American Songwriter | #7 Juice Nothing

**21 October 2016**

**Chamber Folk**

**Produced by Adam Cohen | Patrick Leonard**

**Label: Columbia**

**36:07**

For an 82-year-old man who once famously stated “I am ready to die,” Leonard Cohen had one hell of a musical decade, with three (plus one posthumously) critically revered records, each hypothesised as the legend’s last. But none of these releases could have deservedly carried that title except for the suitably titled *You Want It Darker*, as it is just that: sooooo much darker, aware of its terminal mortality, addressing the circumstances directly, intimately exposing its physical crumbling with a signature dismal humour, and gifting us with

one of the best albums of his six-decade career, three weeks before his final breath. It’s not cryptic, arty, or clever. It’s not some big deal statement. It’s just an old man having his final say. And that is what makes it so heartbreakingly sad.

**“Using his remaining time, he’s not only putting his house in order, he’s tidying up ours too. *You Want It Darker* prepares us for his departure and, in turn, shows us how it’s done, so we have a road map--pockmarked by land mines as it is--in place when we reach that stage.”**

**— Consequence of Sound**



## End of Year Lists

*#1 Clash | #41 The Line of Best Fit | #23 Juice Nothing*

**30 September 2011**

**UK IDM Bass**

**Produced by Modeselektor**

**Label: Monkeytown**

**55:46**

When creating “the perfect electronic dance record” on paper, the criteria would include a bunch of stuff, such as it must be electronic, and it must be danceable. But, like, not just mindless dancing. There should at least be some degree of intelligence behind the movements, perhaps by not taking itself too seriously? But aware that it’s not taking itself seriously? And in that way, never becoming the joke within the joke? And while we’re at it, let’s stick some extra genres in there, perhaps a bit of hip hop will fit nice. As well as some techno. Ok, now

add some pop? Some IDM? That smells great! Stir it up! Done! Call it Monkeytown! Wrap it in a tight package! Call Thom Yorke and get his stamp of approval! There you go! The most fun you can have with machines all decade! Maybe!

**“Monkeytown is the sound of two men working in harmony, perfectly in control of their machines. And it may just be one of the albums of the year.”**

**— BBC Music**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Pazz and Jop | #2 No Ripcord | #2 Pretty Much Amazing | #4 musicOMH | #4 Paste | #4 PopMatters | #6 Prefix | #6 Slant | #6 TIME | #7 Cokemachineglow | #7 Pitchfork | #8 Consequence of Sound | #8 Urban Outfitters | #9 NME | #14 Juice Nothing

**19 April 2011**

**Art Pop**

**Produced by Merrill Garbus**

**Label: 4AD**

**42:12**

*If your initial reaction to Whokill was anything like mine, then you understand the immediate attention that this record demanded, ear pressed against the stereo wondering how something could be so originally quirky yet so unpretentiously joyous at the same time. It's a complete clutter of raw carnival chaos but it never loses those irie vibes as if it's performing itself all for itself, a celebration going inwards. What a rare type of weird it is when the weird is so wholly effortlessly weird as well as being completely comfortable within its weird, inviting you into the*

*weird party if you wanna come but it's totally chill if you'd rather not. Hey, I don't know if you remember, but back in April 2011, this was every hipster's new favourite artist.*

***“Catchy yet abrasive, noisy yet intimate, kind of funny yet also kind of scary, this is post-pop at its most vertiginously original.”***

***— The Independent on Sunday***



**139**

**PUSHA T  
DAYTONA**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Complex | #1 Dummy | #1 Highsnobiety | #1 Pretty Much Amazing | #1 The 405 | #2 DJBooth (Hip Hop R&B) | #2 Earbuddy | #2 Loud and Quiet | #2 The Ringer | #2 Treble | #3 BLARE | #3 The Daily Beast | #4 Billboard | #27 Juice Nothing

**25 May 2018**

**Hardcore Southern Hip Hop**

**Produced by Kanye West**

**Label: G.O.O.D. Music | Def Jam Recordings**

**21:08**

*Daytona is the same old Push, stuck in his boastful flows and standard vocal tones, utterly disinterested in you or whoever as he fires his level-headed lyrical attacks, teaching all of us how to flaunt a full row of sharp teeth without feeling the need to bark. But then... there's Kanye West. And his production here is some of his most impressive to date, smothering his beats with dirt without muffing their potency, punctuated only by the bare essentials then dominated with hard samples which never crack a smile or even close their eyes. And it is right there that two very important artists*

*touch at their peak forte, sold as one 21-minute product which abandons you far too soon, beaten to near-death but begging for more. Please, do it again. Do. It. Again. Please.*

***“Another rare instance of an artist coming up with a classic a decade after what seemed like the peak of his career.”***

***— Pretty Much Amazing***



DEAFHEAVEN

NEW BERMUDA

138

DEAFHEAVEN  
NEW BERMUDA

## End of Year Lists

#2 Treble | #3 Revolver | #6 The Daily Beast | #9 Magnet | #10  
Stereogum | #12 SPIN | #15 Sputnikmusic | #17 Diffuser | #18 Blare  
#18 Mashable | #19 Decibel | #21 Consequence of Sound | #25 No  
Ripcord | #26 Pitchfork | #36 PopMatters | #6 Juice Nothing

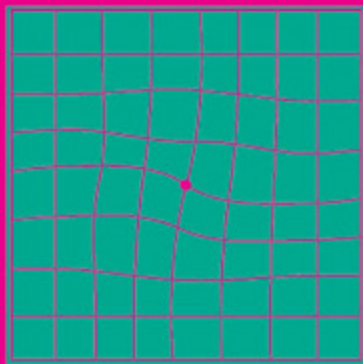
**2 October 2015**  
**Atmospheric Blackgaze**  
**Produced by Jack Shirley**  
**Label: Anti-**  
**46:35**

If you cannot bear to have your little bubble of snobbery contaminated by any genre which hasn't gone through the proper dark channels, then this is only because it challenges the shadowy emotions you have worked so hard to build within yourself. Certainly, *New Bermuda* is well-documented as a threat to any self-proclaimed purist's comfort zone, as the band painlessly shift their personalities from black metal to shoegaze to post-rock to even (God forbid!) a happy progressive indie at times, without ever dampening the impenetrable screams of joyous

agony. Does this bother you? Then don't listen to it. Turn it off and go find one of the internet's many support groups where people whine about this band, you'll be ok. But for the rest of us who can handle the rollercoaster uplifting our spirits then eroding our ghosts with a palette of colourful evils... well, we're probably better than you, let's be honest.

***"Its audacity and stylistic shifts may have resulted in an album that's not quite as much like coming home as *Sunbather*, but it shows a genuine and fascinating maturation in a band that deserves to remain in the spotlight for all the right reasons."***

**— Consequence of Sound**



# THE KNIFE

SHAKING

THE HABITUAL

**137**

**THE KNIFE**  
**SHAKING THE HABITUAL**

## End of Year Lists

#1 eMusic | #1 The Line of Best Fit | #2 The Needle Drop | #3  
PopMatters | #6 Consequence of Sound | #7 Slant | #9 Spin | #10  
The Wire | #11 No Ripcord | #14 Pitchfork | #15 Obscure Sound  
#17 Gorilla vs. Bear | #17 XLR8R | #26 Juice Nothing

**8 April 2013**  
**Experimental Electronic**  
**Produced by The Knife**  
**Label: Rabid**  
**96:20**

With all of its tribal insanity and little insects spitting into your speakers, *Shaking the Habitual* is the Album of the Decade sabotaged by its own doodling. At times, the exciting mental noises and organic values possess you with a deranged weirdness, prompting you to dance all wrong, but at other times, it's frustratingly pointless, building challenging textures which don't do anything other than grate their audience, becoming far too intense for no determinable reason. It's an unfocused mess of the highest-highs and lowest-lows, begging to be cut

in half to become an untouchable masterpiece, but here we are, and we are not there. Still, we must respect The Knife's uncompromising high-risk vision here. They created a monster. They don't give a fuck about where you come into this.

***“Whether they’re successful or not isn’t quite the point; what makes *Shaking the Habitual* so important is that The Knife used an important moment in their own history to truly subvert the hierarchy that both the band and the album exist in. Thankfully, they also wrote some near-perfect music in the process.”***

**— XLR**



**136**

**CRYSTAL CASTLES  
(III)**

## End of Year Lists

*#4 NME | #19 Complex | #34 Spinner | #39 Consequence of Sound  
#47 Obscure Sound | #48 Treble | #49 Pitchfork | #23 Juice Nothing*

**13 November 2012**  
**Synthpop Witch House**  
**Produced by Ethan Kath | Jacknife Lee**  
**Label: Fiction | Polydor**  
**39:33**

The general opinion may be divided on this one, but one thing was for certain: these so-called modern pioneers of the hyper synth-punk/chiptune scene had closed their trademark chapter, now turning their third page into a significantly darker hue. The vocal manipulation and electro beauty may still haunt the air, but they developed it into a new class of witchy poison, the duo we once knew now sinking into a much more chilling, doomy, and serious experience. The fun and games were well and truly over, especially after founding members

Alice Glass and Ethan Kath went to court shortly following, another nasty case of sexual misconduct allegations, destroying the band as we knew it. I'm no longer even interested.

**“Being doomed seldom sounded so beautiful.”**

**— NME**



**135**

**AESOP ROCK  
THE IMPOSSIBLE KID**

## End of Year Lists

#18 LA Music Blog | #27 Passion of the Weiss | #3 The Needle Drop  
#46 Pretty Much Amazing | #45 Juice Nothing

**29 April 2016**  
**Abstract East Coast Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Aesop Rock**  
**Label: Rhymesayers**  
**48:32**

Two decades strong into the rap game and Aesop suddenly woke up again on a forwards-facing mission, a complete refocus on the application of a straight-ahead motion, walking with full-forced intention and a whole stack of jagged edges to clear his pathway clean. His recognisably monotone vocals spit so many conscious wordings that you could never catch them all in one sitting, while he animates his language manifestations with his signature deadpan sense of humour and an impressive amount of millennial lingo complete with up-to-

date internet references. And yet... he does one thing even better. The dude programs these sleek beats himself, shoving colourful details into every corner and teaching us precisely what four years of working on an album is supposed to sound like. It's also his best release in 15 years if you ask me. And you are asking me. That's why you're here. Aesop!

***“Despite the similar aesthetic to what’s come before, mundanity refuses to set in. This is another great Aesop Rock album to add to the pile--another TKO to further solidify his underground king status.”***

**— Consequence of Sound**



# HONEY



134

ROBYN  
HONEY

## End of Year Lists

#1 Slant Magazine | #2 Dazed | #2 musicOMH | #2 NOW Magazine  
#2 The Guardian | #3 The Interns | #4 Gaffa (Sweden) | #4 Pitchfork  
#4 Q Magazine | #5 Clash | #5 Gorilla vs. Bear | #5 Spectrum  
Culture | #5 The Skinny | #5 Us Weekly | #14 Juice Nothing

**26 October 2018**  
**Electro Dance-Pop**  
**Produced by Joseph Mount**  
**Label: Konichiwa | Island | Interscope**  
**40:23**

Robyn has deservedly acquired the reputation as a popstar who dares to evolve further than her rivals, but with *Honey*, the mid-tempo housey club vibe admittedly took a few spins for me to find my space within. However, once you shake hands with the relaxed grooves and engrossingly luscious production, you may realise that Robyn has created a very personal heartbreak record here without disrupting that delicious centre of optimistic euphoria. She's adopted a vibrant nostalgic trip then made it her own by futurising the retro, utilising a synthy sound by

name but far from anything synthetic via its emotional warmth. And when the world ends, may we all remember Robyn as the true unsung queen of the contemporary electropop scene, Amen.

***“It can be taken as superficially perfect pop music, or you can listen a little deeper and hear just how intricately woven her heartbreak anthems really are. She is an artist in the truest sense. And *Honey* is her latest masterpiece.”***

**— musicOMH.com**



**133**

**SIA**

**1000 FORMS OF FEAR**

SIA - 1000 FORMS OF FEAR

## End of Year Lists

#13 Digital Spy | #13 Slant Magazine | #14 Time Out New York  
#15 SPIN | #42 Amazon | #44 The Telegraph | #50 Pretty Much  
Amazing | #76 Wondering Sound | #13 Juice Nothing

**8 July 2014**

**Electropop**

**Produced by Monkey Puzzle | RCA Records**

**Label: Electropop**

**48:41**

*Sia could easily be considered the greatest pop songwriter of the last 15 years, from her previous sticky solo offerings, to her credits on some of the biggest hits in recent memory, to this: 1000 Forms of Fear. Sia had already publicly denounced her fame a few years previous yet she lost the battle against her own creativity, forced by her passion to polish together this dramatic offering which is more authentic than any other commercial garbage your radio may ever spew at you. No melody is too difficult, no word goes pronounced without fervour, and no note isn't*

*worth reaching for, hence why I crawl into her voice like a blanket and finally feel safe again. Because this is life-saving pop. Therapy pop. Therapop.*

**“Whether or not stadium pop is to everyone’s taste, this is it in its smartest and most human form.”**

**— Fact Magazine**

KATE TEMPEST



**132**

**KATE TEMPEST**  
**THE BOOK OF TRAPS AND LESSONS**

## End of Year Lists

#7 BBC Radio 6 Music | #48 Rough Trade | #82 The Quietus | #12  
Juice Nothing

**14 June 2019**  
**UK Spoken Word Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Dan Carey**  
**Label: Republic**  
**44:58**

Swinging out with her third gobsmacking album in a row, Kate blatantly wears the crown of the wokest of the wokes, the highest consciousness of the conscious hip hops, so completely up-to-date with our current political terrors that her words become our words and then we vomit. She has mastered the art of immersing herself into the bigger picture then delivering an immense depth of education without talking down to anyone, which is exactly how she makes just about every other UK artist seem weak and pathetic in comparison. But while her beat

choices only improve per release, they do not have the ability to undermine the simple fact that she is a spoken word performer at her very core, and her poetic talents harness the unparalleled power to inspire anyone who dares to listen. Not to make art, mind you. But to take action.

**“She has a unique capacity to include all the world’s issues in the album just by slipping in an occasional nugget of truth that punches the listener in the gut.”**

**— The Line of Best Fit**



**TAME IMPALA  
LONERISM**

**131**

**TAME IMPALA  
LONERISM**

## End of Year Lists

#1 FILTER | #1 NME | #1 *Obscure Sound* | #1 *Urban Outfitters* | #2 *musicOMH* | #2 *No Ripcord* | #2 *Under the Radar* | #3 *Treble* | #4 *Pitchfork* | #4 *Pretty Much Amazing* | #5 *Beats Per Minute* | #6 *Exclaim!* | #6 *Pazz & Jop* | #6 *The Guardian* | #13 *Juice Nothing*

**5 October 2012**  
**Neo-Psychedelia**  
**Produced by Kevin Parker**  
**Label: Modular**  
**51:53**

When Tame Impala swam onto the scene with their 2010 debut *Innerspeaker*, there was no doubt in everyone's mind that this was one of the greatest Beatlesy/Lennony rip-off bands we'd heard in a long time. But despite these successes, it seemed Kevin Parker was only finding his footing rather than focusing on a vision—point proven when the (then) 25-year-old released this sophomore, aiming for a more direct and in-your-face poppy rock effort. The washed over effect was minimised without losing that signature psychedelic floatiness

and allowed us to get lost within the swirlies until we were completely alone and sad, just like the title promised. Needless to say, it didn't take long after this record for Paker to be globally recognised as one of Australia's greatest modern exports and for good reason. This reason.

***“Tame Impala possesses an uncanny ear for reconstructing psychedelia that spans decades while remaining undeniably present.”***

**— Prefix Magazine**





# 130

**EARL SWEATSHIRT**  
**SOME RAP SONGS**

PARENTAL  
ADVISORY  
EXPLICIT CONTENT

## End of Year Lists

#4 Sputnikmusic | #5 Far Out Magazine | #5 Vinyl Me, Please  
#6 BLARE | #6 Gorilla vs. Bear | #6 Okayplayer | #6 SPIN | #7  
Highsnobiety | #7 Pitchfork | #8 DJBooth (Hip Hop R&B) | #8  
Esquire (US) | #8 Northern Transmissions | #24 Juice Nothing

**30 November 2018**  
**Experimental Abstract Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Thebe Kgositsile**  
**Label: Columbia | Tan Cressida**  
**24:39**

Some Rap Songs smells like a hastily thrown together project consisting of nothing but afterthoughts. That lazy title? The blurry artwork? The 15-song 24-minute runtime? Surely nothing good can come of this. But after just one listen, this apprehension evaporates and these factors make complete and utter sense. This is not a lazy album, per se. Rather, this is a drained look into Earl's brain, sinking deep into his thoughts both lyrically and musically, and it's well confusing in there. The beats are snippets of glitchy dreams, corrupted and jumbled and disorientating, which

provide the bafflingly dark base required for Earl's flawless rhyming flows, pointing out vague problems in such a sleepy manner that his emotional detachment reigns as the most upsetting component of his entire arsenal. It's great, keep it up.

***“Simultaneously sad, strange, and warmly nostalgic, Some Rap Songs is excitingly listenable and emotionally connected despite its abstruse approach. The album’s triumphs are in its fearless risk taking and the insight it allows into the journey of Earl Sweatshirt’s constant creative regeneration.”***

**— AllMusic**



**129**

**FKA TWIGS**  
**MAGDALENE**

## End of Year Lists

#1 TIME | #4 Bleep | #5 Paste | #5 Treble | #8 The Skinny | #21 The  
Quietus | #29 Consequence of Sound | #36 Uproxx | #37 Rough  
Trade | #11 Juice Nothing

**8 November 2019**  
**Art Glitch Pop**  
**Produced by FKA Twigs**  
**Label: Young Turks**  
**38:48**

Half a decade is a worrying amount of time to wait for a follow-up record but with *Magdalene*, it was worth every damn second passing. FKA Twigs's impressive debut had already established her as one of the most exciting artists on the heat-seeking radar, and she didn't take this newfound attention lightly. Hence why, instead of rushing her output, she took the sound that she'd already claimed as her own, and gradually improved on it until it was done. More seduction. More beauty. But even colder this time. More twisted and "wrong" than ever before. And then

she picked it up and crossed the finish line, cradling one of the decade's most fascinating works mere moments before the clock ran out. How unfair it is of me, then, to already be jumping ahead and wondering... what's next??

***"Magdalene is a magnificently twisted sci-fi torch album, an enthralling account of love, loss, heartbreak and recovery. It is erotic and neurotic, confounding and revelatory, summoning the spirits of such iconoclastic talents as David Bowie, Kate Bush and Björk while affirming its own unique personality."***

**— The Telegraph**



**128**  
**NILS FRAHM**  
**ALL MELODY**

## End of Year Lists

#2 MondoSonoro | #6 The Ringer | #10 Fopp | #10 The Skinny | #13  
Rough Trade | #16 Drift | #18 DJ Mag | #26 The Independent | #27  
musicOMH | #31 Loud and Quiet | #34 Piccadilly Records | #35  
Mixmag | #40 Digital Trends | #10 Juice Nothing

**26 January 2018**  
**Post-Minimalism Electroic**  
**Produced by Nils Frahm**  
**Label: Erased Tapes**  
**73:55**

Nils Frahm has long been celebrated as a unique asset to the modern classical/atmospheric electronic scene, but regardless of former acquaintances, *All Melody* is still a highly approved place to start according to everyone's tastebuds. The precise detailing here is so cautiously delicate that you may find yourself locked into a tender moment privately shared between just the two of you. The aura is slow to make its move but it's forever adjusting, weaving technical textures around you with care. And while these haunting ambiences threaten to

sedate you into an early extinction, your heartbeat remains consistent, lovingly prodded by rhythmic pitter-patterns which nurture dependable repetitions to focus on then follow, directing a challenging path away from genre trademarks without disrupting the tranquillity. Which is a lot of wordy words to just say that this album is incredible.

***“It’s continuously changing, perfectly timed, evenly spaced--an impeccable album.”***

**— Drowned In Sound**

J E S C A H O O P  
S T O N E C H I L D



## End of Year Lists

*#56 Piccadilly Records | #57 Drift | #10 Juice Nothing*

5 July 2019

Indie Folk

Produced by John Parish

Label: Memphis Industries

44:20

After releasing one of the decade's best with 2017's *Memories Are Now*, Jessa Hoop decided to follow it up with another one of the decade's best, right here, with 2019's *Stonechild*. How she reaches such triumph after triumph is no gimmicky scheme, it's simply that Hoop knows her primary strength is her songwriting skills, utilising chord changes to cry for whilst cleverly maximising her limited vocal range, only hinting towards the slight haunt which you will never quite be able to put your finger on. She's always better than whatever anyone thinks and the fact

that she isn't consistently hailed as one of the forerunning heroes of the modern indie-folk scene is a criminal oversight by everyone involved and I think you ought to be ashamed of yourselves.

***“Stonechild isn't as much a revelation as it is an affirmation of the truth--a truth which the singer bears out across the album in fragments, inviting her listeners to construct a full picture for themselves.”***

**— The Line of Best Fit**





End of Year Lists

*#9 Juice Nothing*

**22 November 2019**

**Electropop Bubblegum Bass**

**Produced by A. G. Cook & Easyfun**

**Label: PC Music**

**39:04**

From a distance, *Reflections* is about as shameless as shameless superpop computer music could possibly generate, but listen again! For this is surely the loneliest bubblegum record on the planet, a commercially packaged sadness speaking its heartbreak through a forced smile of candy-coloured dental work. The dancey electronics may appear formulated in style, but the structures are the first indication that there's something deeper at work here, never overusing their greatest hooks which only perpetuates the meandering concern that this may ultimately be

a cleverly disguised cry for help. Even more noteworthy, is that this album is the final release of the decade to make this list, standing as one giant mockery to those publications that ejaculated prematurely, which alone is a priceless accomplishment.

**“Songs on *Reflections* transcend the boundaries of radio-ready pop music and are a reflection (no pun intended) of the larger shift of pop music to something entirely digital in every sense, a shift that seems to mirror that of the music industry in the past decade.”**

**— Clash Music**



## End of Year Lists

*#15 No Ripcord | #84 Fopp | #84 The Atlantic | #15 Juice Nothing*

**2 November 2018**

**Chamber Folk**

**Produced by Rob & Warren Ellis**

**Label: Panta Rei**

**42:30**

*Negative Capability is not only a definitive masterpiece but is also as a quintessential example of how to embrace your age with honour. There have been occasions when I've listened to modern music and I struggled to feel compassion for a 20-year-old whining about the agonising depths of loneliness. Perhaps even a slight condescending smirk may have crossed my face as I questioned their life experiences to make such dramatic claims. But when an exhausted senior citizen has been worn out by decades of sorrow and now spends her time*

*staring down the looming tunnel of death... well, then you listen. Because they know. And that is this album's primary secret weapon. It aches in its own solitary, a timeless torture of yearning for companionship, crying from a tired heart which has nothing left. And that is devastating.*

***“Comparisons with such late-career highlights as Johnny Cash’s American Recordings albums and Leonard Cohen’s You Want It Darker are inevitable, but Negative Capability really does belong in such exalted company.”***

**— The Observer**



**124**

AGNES OBEL

CITIZEN  
OF GLASS

**AGNES OBEL  
CITIZEN OF GLASS**

## End of Year Lists

#15 Gaffa (Norway) | #23 Fopp | #28 Double J | #35 Piccadilly  
Records | #9 Juice Nothing

**21 October 2016**

**Chamber Pop**

**Produced by Agnes Obel**

**Label: PIAS**

**40:50**

*Citizen of Glass is a sedated gift from the heavens. Using a low-key stringy focus to deliver its magic, there is something so authentic to what Agnes Obel is doing, each song treated with the same mature attention as if a personified group of children, held by maternal arms, hushed by affection, but never hidden from the sad weight of our entangled world. And that's the key which suggests this record is more genuine than so many of those who attempt to capture the same foundations of beauty-meets-misery in audio format. Because this is never one way or the other, but*

*forever a mixture, finding the love in the rain, appreciating the time alone, and recognising the human around the heartbreak.*

***“Citizen of Glass is like entering a misty realm of wonder where each unpredictable turn holds a new set of unknowns.”***

**— No Ripcord**



# 123

***RUN THE JEWELS***  
***RUN THE JEWELS 3***

## End of Year Lists

#4 Paste | #7 The Skinny | #10 Slant Magazine | #16 New York Daily News | #19 Earbuddy | #19 Treble | #22 Rough Trade | #29 Pitchfork | #31 Fopp | #32 The Alternative | #33 PopMatters | #37 God Is In The TV | #42 The Needle Drop | #43 Pigeons & Planes

**24 December 2016**  
**Hardcore Hip Hop**  
**Produced by El-P**  
**Label: Run the Jewels, Inc.**  
**51:27**

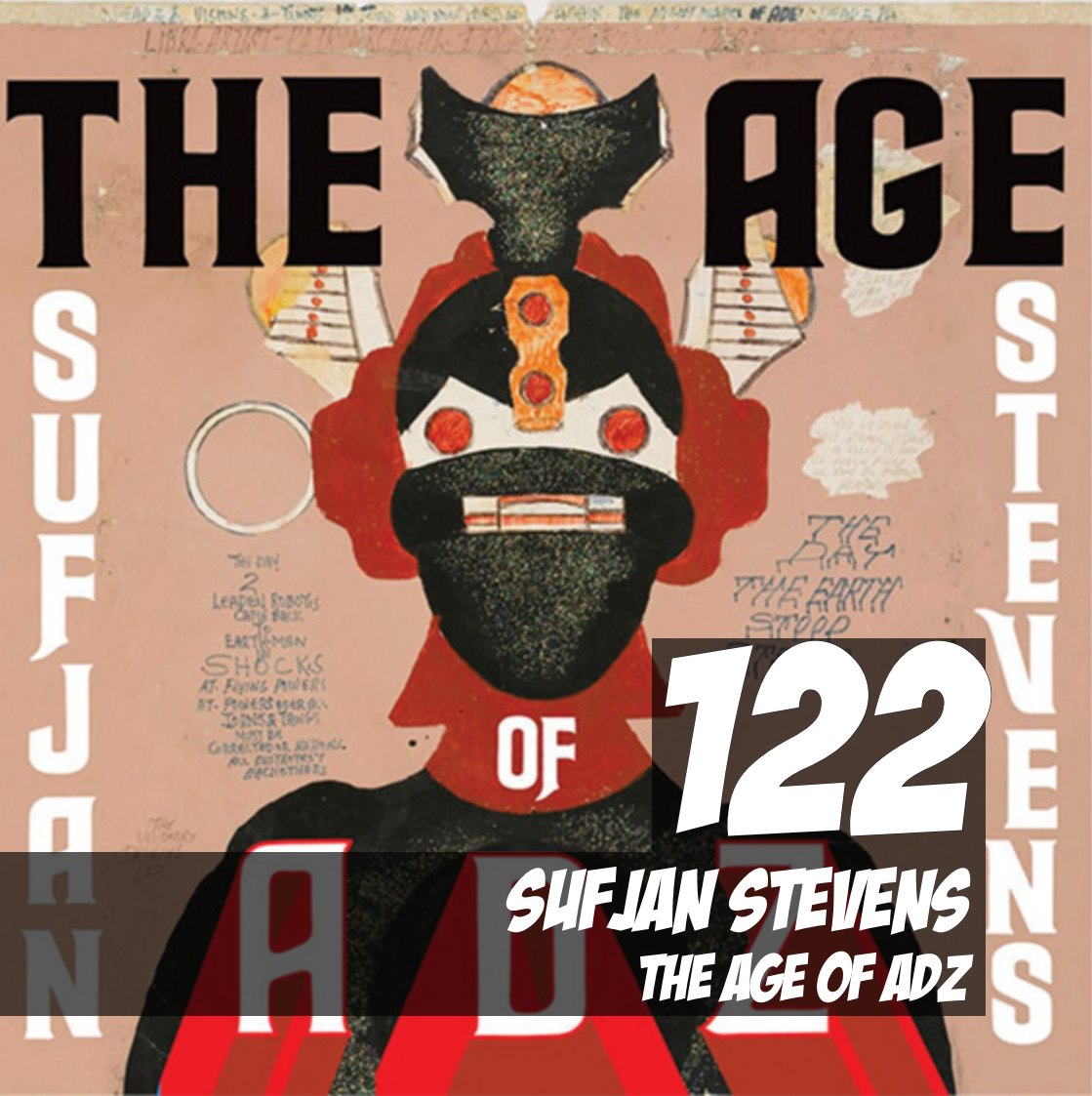
The biggest career-mistake Run the Jewels ever made was releasing their massively anticipated third album the day before Christmas, meaning that it technically did not qualify for anyone's end-of-2016 or 2017 lists, immediately erasing itself from the permanent promotion those types of publications provide. That said, the duo had obviously earned enough fan-stripes to not care about such accolades, and I guess they were much more concerned with delivering a solid project to place on the top of their already two-piece pile of solid projects. Which,

of course, they effortlessly achieved by exercising a deeper attention to production layering and song craftsmanship while learning that "where to strike" rather than "how hard to strike" actually causes more damage. I still reckon that Christmas thing was beyond stupid though. Just wait a week next time, damnit!

**"The duo's knack for high five-worthy boasts and massive one-liners remains undiluted. However, RTJ3 truly excels in some of its darkest moments."**

**— The Skinny**





## End of Year Lists

#1 Under the Radar | #3 Sputnikmusic | #4 Stereogum | #6 Time  
#9 Paste | #10 Drowned in Sound | #11 Pretty Much Amazing | #11  
Slant | #16 Prefix | #17 One Thirty BPM | #19 PopMatters | #19  
Treble | #20 Clash | #7 Juice Nothing

**12 October 2010**  
**Progressive Art Pop**  
**Produced by Sufjan Stevens**  
**Label: Asthmatic Kitty**  
**74:49**

Like a summary of everything good that we learned from popular music over the decade previous, Sufjan compiled then nailed together some sort of a weird genre here, which some might refer to as indie-electronic-glitchy-progressive-folk-melodic-pop-maybe? Maybe. But regardless of your chosen label, there are certain descriptions we simply cannot deny such as “rich” and “exhilarating” and “compassionate”, all apt adjectives applied to these complex and messy robotic arrangements which truly flex his ambitious fluidity, ending with a

somewhat overwhelming 25-minute track which is worthy of your money alone. Before the decade had hardly begun, Stevens was already placed high up on the decade’s who’s who list and, #spoileralert, Sufjan appears later in this book again.

***“If the point of music is for us to take something from it - whether it be an emotional response or a change in mindset or any sort of inspiration - then *The Age Of Adz* is the most selfless album ever recorded, and Sufjan is the most giving composer.”***

**— Sputnikmusic**



**121**

**MY BLOODY VALENTINE**  
**MBV**

## End of Year Lists

#1 No Ripcord | #1 *Obscure Sound* | #1 *Uncut* | #3 *Consequence of Sound* | #3 *TIME* | #4 *Pitchfork* | #4 *Time Out London* | #5 *Cokemachineglow* | #5 *Stereogum* | #10 *PopMatters* | #10 *The Guardian* | #11 *Under the Radar* | #12 *MAGNET* | #40 *Juice Nothing*

**3 February 2013**  
**Shoegaze Dream Pop**  
**Produced by Kevin Shields**  
**Label: m b v**  
**46:37**

*Legend tells that Kevin Shields started recording this album in 1996, then scrapped over 60 hours of taped material before having a mental meltdown. And yet, somehow, 22 years after their breakthrough *Loveless* came out, MBV arrived, and what's more, it sounded less than a day older than where we left off. Washed-out riffs blurred together; listener concentration on the drums was rewarded; hushed inaudible whispers crawled through subtle distortions which swirled and then swirled and then drowned your brain in dreams of fuzz, echoing inside*

*of you then completely consuming everything you ever cared for. Perhaps it isn't as good as *Loveless* but quite literally no record on this planet is, right? At least My Bloody Valentine know their strong points, proving their timelessness by providing us with this densely nostalgic comeback which fulfilled every desire you could have ever logically hoped for. Think about it, MBV could have sucked! It risked their sacred legacy! Dangerous games were played here.*

***“m b v creates a new timeline for My Bloody Valentine, and one that recalls the past in a broader and bolder light. They're better for it, their catalog is stronger for it, and by album's end, they're still the best at swirling guitars.”***

***— Consequence of Sound***

ST. VINCENT

120

ST. VINCENT  
STRANGE MERCY

STRANGE

## End of Year Lists

#1 *Consequence of Sound* | #1 *One Thirty BPM* | #1 *Treble* | #1  
*Under the Radar* | #5 *No Ripcord* | #5 *Slant* | #6 *Pretty Much*  
*Amazing* | #7 *DIY* | #7 *NME* | #7 *PopMatters* | #8 *A.V. Club* | #8  
*Obscure Sound* | #8 *Q Magazine* | #10 *Juice Nothing*

**13 September 2011**  
**Indie Art Pop Rock**  
**Produced by John Congleton**  
**Label: 4AD**  
**40:51**

Justice was slowly served the further down the decade we went, but around 2011, St Vincent was still an overlooked hero of pop. She set her traps beneath the scene and lured curious listeners as close as she could before snapping them up then performing questionable actions upon them; some quite nice, others a little less comfortable. Throughout her career, this lady could never be called predictable but it did seem as if an imperative component of this artistic exploration was only set in motion on *Strange Mercy*, where everything was catchy but

progressive, operative yet distorted, and loaded with exactly the right types of creepy tricks to maintain an intellectual nervousness. Try not to fight it or you might get hurt. It feels better once you get used to it.

**“Like the best art, *Strange Mercy* lets you know that it means something, though what the point is is as much open to interpretation as it is a matter of its author’s intentions, which is how it should be.”**

**— PopMatters**



**119**

**DAUGHN GIBSON  
ALL HELL**

## End of Year Lists

#17 Tiny Mix Tapes | #24 The Fly | #30 Urban Outfitters | #12 Juice  
Nothing

**April 25 2012**

**Indietronica**

**Produced by Daughn Gibson**

**Label: White Denim**

**30:25**

As reflective and as black and white as the artwork may suggest, this record always stuck in my mind as something particularly special. With baritone croonings over a slow warm trip-hop country vibe, *All Hell* is pretty much everything we ever needed from a debut, whether we knew it or not. It's short. It's original. It's emotionally mature. It's lyrically powerful. And it never really falters from this path, using its manly manliness to contrast against its rugged vulnerability, a masculine beauty growing bolder after each track passes, enticing you further

into the darkness where nothing bad ever happens. And once that's done, let's drive that pickup truck through the dusty night with a shotgun and have a conversation for a while.

***“All Hell is a subtly clever record that pits one type of music that strongly evokes one era--here, country music--against another, namely this decade’s sample-heavy culture.”***

**— Pitchfork**





# 118

**KING KRULE**  
**6 FEET BENEATH THE MOON**

## End of Year Lists

#5 Clash | #6 The Fly | #6 Time Out London | #7 Listen Before You Buy | #30 FasterLouder | #30 Piegons & Planes | #38 Complex  
#38 The Guardian | #46 PopMatters | #47 NME | #48 The Needle Drop | #99 musicOMH | #2 Juice Nothing

**24 August 2014**

**Art Pop Rock**

**Produced by Archy Marshall**

**Label: True Panther | XL**

**52:26**

Perhaps the (then) 19-year-old Archy Marshall's appearance does not entirely match the recognisable Tom Waits-y vocals that he scrapes upon simplistic guitar work and downtempo beats, but his old man voice extends far beyond his youth in the most stereotypically British of ways. It's a bleak and desolate affair, lonely in the dark downpour, contemplating the dullness of life, miserable about the state of everything, yet too lazy and exhausted to fully adhere to the growls aching inside. And it's kind of comforting to know that we're not

alone on those days, yeah? Granted, the album does overstay its welcome but this does not detract from the fact that Krule has found a style that no one else but him has found in a long long time. And considering his age, it'll probably take a while before we're rid of him too, so we might as well just join in with him now.

**“6 Feet Beneath the Moon holds up as the kind of statement to truly brag about--a debut that's masterfully crafted, reasonably ambitious, and, more importantly, exists as a truly unique statement.”**

**— No Ripcord**



**117**

**XI4 XI4**

**GIRL WITH BASKET OF FRUIT**

End of Year Lists

*#8 Juice Nothing*

**8 February 2019**

**Experimental Post-Industrial**

**Produced by Angela Seo & Greg Saunier**

**Label: Polyvinyl**

**36:35**

Following a brief 2017 flirtation with a more poppy appeal, Xiu Xiu bid that soft world goodbye then smashed straight back into the darkest depths of the weird with this record, violently shattering the crown over their own lunatic heads which bleeds the words “still the kings of desperation and pain which would be comical if it wasn’t so terrifyingly disturbing”. And yet while this is closer to the tried-and-molested Xiu Xiu flavour we’ve already come to know and fear, it maintains a steady forward motion just like they always have, leading one to wonder

if perhaps Jamie Stewart has already built a solid case for his inclusion in the big boys’ history book after we run the next update.

**“Affecting, cathartic and unsettling, *Girl with Basket of Fruit* reflects that while the edge to Xiu Xiu’s music has changed with time, it never dulls.”**

**— AllMusic**



## End of Year Lists

*#3 The Skinny | #3 The Times The Sunday Times | #3 Uproxx | #4 No Ripcord | #5 Dork | #5 Nerdist | #5 NPR Music | #5 The Line of Best Fit | #5 Variance | #6 Northern Transmissions | #6 The New Zealand Herald | #7 Earbuddy | #13 Juice Nothing*

**30 September 2016**  
**Art Pop Folktronica**  
**Produced by Justin Vernon**  
**Label: Jagjaguwar**  
**34:10**

Make no mistake, *22, A Million* is a desperate cry for help. An utter public meltdown that is too afraid to let anyone know. It's disorientated and confused, tweaking out but too pretentious and embarrassed to outright say it. And so it hides beneath flawed noises, clipping and distorting all over the show like it's a print out from a record producer's worst nightmare. Remember Bon Iver's signature peacefulness? It's here except digitised by a buggy system, fragments of his ideas broken apart, the sorrow synthesised, ashamed of its injured soul hence why distracts

us with this wreckage, praying that nobody can see it for what it truly is: a problem. And by doing so, Bon Iver has once again created a truly magical piece albeit fractured beyond recognition and I just hope the dude's ok.

***“Not since Kid A has an album so superb pushed away and pulled closer its audience, simultaneously and with such aplomb”***

**— Pretty Much Amazing**

# CARLY RAE JEPSEN

## *E·MOTION*



# 115

## **CARLY RAE JEPSEN**

### **EMOTION**

emotion (i-mo-shun), a natural instinctive state of mind deriving from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others. ex: "She was attempting to control her emotions."

### End of Year Lists

#1 Cosmopolitan | #1 Popjustice | #2 Entertainment Weekly | #2 Mashable | #2 People | #3 Noisey | #3 Stereogum | #3 Variance  
#4 TIME | #5 Idolator | #6 Drowned in Sound | #6 Vulture | #9 musicOMH | #9 Newsweek | #10 Magnet | #46 Juice Nothing

**24 June 2015**

**Synth Dance-Pop**

**Produced by Multiple**

**Label: 604 | School Boy | Interscope**

**44:02**

Do not fear the shameless catchiness which satisfies the entire surface area of your guiltiest tastebuds, for this is still an admirable piece of work, a flawlessly calculated earworm, birthed in a pile of confectionery and sent to summarise modern-day mainstream pop better than perhaps any other album from the decade. Finally, the one-hit-wonder stamp has been scrubbed clean from Jepsen forehead, owed to her one-word hookiness and those unobtrusive bubbles which bounce along, stuffed full of fun and popping pleasure into your face, flooding your

joyous days with carefree 80s-esque bangers, all smiles, youth, and love.

***“It’s so proud to be pop and hopefully this’ll make others realise it’s never a guilty pleasure to enjoy songs that make you happy; songs that make you wanna dance your ass off and songs that perfectly fit the criteria for pretending to be in a music video.”***

**— Drowned In Sound**





## End of Year Lists

#2 Clash | #3 Piegons & Planes | #5 The Guardian | #8 Listen Before You Buy | #9 No Ripcord | #12 Obscure Sound | #14 BBC Radio 6 Music | #14 FasterLouder | #14 musicOMH | #17 Resident Advisor | #19 Gigwise | #20 The Fly | #25 MOJO | #9 Juice Nothing

**8 April 2013**

**Alternative Art Pop Future Garage R&B**

**Produced by James Blake**

**Label: ATLAS | A&M | Polydor**

**39:22**

*If James Blake was good at only one thing (and he's not) it'd be evolving in directions that any fan would be more than satisfied with, carrying his sound to disorientating heights by employing mumbling poetic lyrics, subtle falsettos, and stark songs which utilise restraint. And this careful planning provides you with the abundant space needed to locate smaller details within a bigger secret, conspiring to divert your emotions his way. And then, before you realise how out of control you've become, your mood has crumbled into loneliness and your tears*

*backdrop down your spine, tickling chills into the base of your soul. Which is to say that Blake is in a league of his own and is still arguably the most exciting new artist of the decade with next to no defensible competition.*

***“Overgrown continues to build on a fantastic reputation: one that much like his music is aided by layer and layer of calculated additions that all together showcases one of music’s most gifted composers.”***

***— Delusions of Adequacy***

*Modern  
Vampires  
of the City*

VAMPIRE  
WEEKEND

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**VAMPIRE WEEKEND**  
**MODERN VAMPIRES OF THE CITY**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Pitchfork | #1 PopMatters | #1 Rolling Stone | #1 Slant | #1  
Under the Radar | #2 Amazon | #2 Consequence of Sound | #2  
Pretty Much Amazing | #2 Q Magazine | #2 TIME | #3 Spin | #3  
Stereogum | #3 The Daily Beast | #21 Juice Nothing

14 May 2013

Indie Pop

Produced by Rostam Batmanglij | Ariel Rechtshaid

Label: XL

42:54

This album operates on undiluted delight, having far too much fun to even entertain your negativities or doubts, already preoccupied with reading childhood bedtime stories under the starry night or delightfully skipping down the pebble road to the home that mom built. It's so rare that a band can hit those naive heart valves using nothing but peppy bliss without taking the piss, but this group have perfected the art of energetic afro-pop wrapped warmly in adorably cute melodies, radiating stuffed-to-the-brim energies which vibrate as one singular, strange

and exceptionally inventive unit. The attention to detail may play with the lines of over-ambition and over-production but it never falls over anything, except for perhaps an overdose of cheer and those smiles that are suspiciously wider than normal.

***“The new record by Vampire Weekend is the best alternative pop album you will hear this year. Unselfconscious, technically brilliant in a way that crucially you will never actually notice, shimmering with beautiful, strange melodies and just a small smidge of actual bonkers”***

**— Drowned In Sound**



# 112

**GANG GANG DANCE  
EYE CONTACT**

## End of Year Lists

#6 Stereogum | #8 DIY | #8 Tiny Mix Tapes | #9 No Ripcord | #14  
One Thirty BPM | #15 The Line of Best Fit | #15 Urban Outfitters  
#19 Cokemachineglow | #19 Slant | #22 Uncut | #25 Pitchfork  
#26 The Guardian | #30 FACT Magazine | #15 Juice Nothing

**9 May 2011**  
**Neo-Psychedelia**  
**Produced by Sean Maffucci**  
**Label: 4AD**  
**47:55**

When an album opens its doors with an 11-minute track, you can consider yourself immediately informed that this group did not even acknowledge your presence in the making of their album. Instead, Gang Gang Dance seemed oblivious to how on-the-cusp they were to hipster stardom and they produced a neo-psychedelia record in a time when neo-psychedelia records were a penny a handful, managing to stand out by laying an egg decorated with Eastern carvings, cracking and on the verge of bursting open with a litter of surprises. It's bright, it's jammy, and it's all very exciting,

scampering up the ladder to become the band's most critically acclaimed achievement, above anything they'd done before and, unfortunately, since.

***“Eye Contact solidifies the group’s heavyweight majesty. Gang Gang Dance injects pop music with new life, leading the quest for newer sounds from ageless sources and mixing it all together in a critically irresistible way.”***

**— PopMatters**



## End of Year Lists

#7 Sputnikmusic | #42 The Needle Drop | #45 LA Music Blog | #14  
Juice Nothing

**6 May 2016**  
**Technical Thrash Metal**  
**Produced by Byron Filson**  
**Label: Earache**  
**73:21**

*Terminal Redux* is less of an album, more of an over-the-top science-fiction joyride, narrating the story of a military general astronaut who rises to intergalactic political power thanks to that immortality mineral he found, nice one. It's a ridiculous concept which suddenly hardens into something serious due to the insane creativity of the music itself, which figuratively traps the listener in a spiky spacecraft smothered in flames, hurtling through the galaxy at breathtakingly high-speeds, spinning all over the show, aware of the inherent danger, yet blasting the

countless treacherous obstacles off-screen using guitar riffs as its main firepower, narrowly dodging every threatening object with technical expertise and a mathematical accuracy, remaining fluid yet never dropping the pace. Whew! And when you eventually reach safety, you will ache in exhaustion, utterly astonished, and eternally grateful to have survived. One more time?

**“Every link in the rust-corroded chain holds for 73 minutes, without releasing your neck.”**

**— Spin**





**17 February 2018**

**Deep House**

**Produced by Nicolas Jaar**

**Label: Other People**

**66:35**

*Under various monikers, Nicolas Jaar has repetitively carved his markings deep into the legendary mountains of this decade's strongest electronic scenery, and *Against All Logic* ranks as no exception, wearing its sexy nostalgic club trip proudly whilst dancing into adoration with its eyes closed. Which is funny, because 2012 - 2017 reads like an appalling plan on paper. A collection of unreleased material? Running for over an hour? Dropped without any announcement? But why? Do not ask questions. Just listen. Because what we have here is a compatible assemblage of like-*

*minded sounds, locking into that old school groove complete with all your basic housewarming needs, including central heating and a microwave. He's better than anyone, so why complicate the situation? You're spoiling it for everyone, shut up.*

***“No previous knowledge of his catalog is necessary to get happily lost in the blissful layers of 2012/2017.”***

**— AllMusic**

ROLO TOMASSI  
TIME WILL DIE AND LOVE WILL BURY IT



**109**

**ROLO TOMASSI**  
**TIME WILL DIE AND LOVE WILL BURY IT**

## End of Year Lists

#10 Kerrang! | #11 Sputnikmusic | #12 Upset | #22 Stereogum  
#83 Bandcamp Daily | #8 Juice Nothing

**2 March 2018**  
**Post-Math Metalcore**  
**Produced by Lewis Johns**  
**Label: Holy Roar**  
**53:04**

Welcome to the sound of a band who have been missioning forward for many many years yet have only now stuck their flag into an apex that they were always destined to reach. This is not quite the Rolo Tomassi you remember. It's a deliberate surge away from the motions without abandoning their reputation, everything so refined, expertly sequenced but no rushing, only methodically pacing intended to build and build and built until it's built and it's big. There's a rare harmony breeding within these songs, a scarcely found place of

comfort slipped between the heavenly atmospherics and screamy post-rocks, chained to a core centre, daydreaming into space, but still willing to chew a piece of your nose off. What an achievement, so satisfying in delivery that it placed their entire discography into a higher perspective, really.

**“Time Will Die is a hugely satisfying listen, with the longer songs in particular allowing the band free rein to indulge every experimental urge [...] This album sounds like a multi-part epic made up entirely of multi-part epics. And also, undoubtedly, like a career high.”**

**— Kerrang!**



## End of Year Lists

#18 PopMatters | #33 Drift | #66 Piccadilly Records | #66 XLR8R  
#6 Juice Nothing

**13 April 2018**  
**Microhouse IDM**  
**Produced by Ryan Lee West**  
**Label: Erased Tapes**  
**58:46**

*Persona* was inspired by the 1966 film of the same name, which, in turn, inspired me to watch the movie itself. Isn't that such a lovely sequence of events? And now I speak from an elevated point of authority, explaining that said cinematic classic deals with themes of duality and identity confusion, which connects perfectly to Rival Consoles' warpy throbs of subdued ambiances, the album curling around you, asking you to define the line where its music ends and your mind begins. Quickly, answer the detailed techno before it answers for you,

swaying your body however it sees fit while the ever-expansive atmosphere breathes around you, rewarding your dopamine sacks with deeper levels of liquid per every visit, assisting the familiarisation of being completely absorbed into an external entity, finally surrendering yourself as part of something much greater. Jesus, calm down, it's only music.

***“Persona is uneasy listening, with heavier rhythms and more fragmented melodies than West deployed on previous works like *Howl* and *Night Melody*, yet it’s equally engrossing. It leaves a deep psychic impression--a truly ‘arthouse’ album that begs repeated revisiting, to explore its many conflicting faces.”***

**— The A.V. Club**



## End of Year Lists

#9 Gorilla vs. Bear | #12 FACT Magazine | #13 Listen Before You Buy | #20 Pitchfork | #28 The Guardian | #32 Pretty Much Amazing | #5 Juice Nothing

**13 April 2013**  
**Alternative R&B Indietronica**  
**Produced by Jai Paul**  
**Label: XL**  
**37:07**

An unauthorised collection of leaked demos were prematurely ejaculated into our ears and the surprise impregnation shook the music world to the very womb. Questions erupted. Was this stolen material? Was this a publicity stunt? Did Jai Paul even exist? The hype was invaluable, and the masses snapped at the bait, leading to a messy yet exceptionally charming group of bedroom recordings where flashes of ideas came out of nowhere then disappeared before anyone could properly grasp them, complete with hushed vocal deliveries of sexiness

and painfully long gaps of unmastered silence between. Following this, Jai Paul reportedly disappeared in anger at the violation, then resurfaced six years later to grant this record an official release, demystifying the genius and diminishing the sucker-punch this story once held. However, we must never forget that back in 2013, this was probably the most exciting music conversation the world had experienced in quite a while.

***“By coming to terms with the past and allowing its release, Jai has allowed fans new and old to come together over this music; music that sent huge ripples round the internet, to many of today’s greatest artists. In 2013 we lost sight of Jai Paul, but we gained this perfect, imperfect record.”***

**— The Line of Best Fit**





MASTODON

ONCE MORE 'ROUND THE SUN

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MASTODON

ONCE MORE 'ROUND THE SUN

## End of Year Lists

#6 CraveOnline | #7 Revolver | #28 Gigwise | #29 Decibel | #31 The  
Skinny | #34 Sputnikmusic | #37 FasterLouder | #9 Juice Nothing

**24 June 2014**  
**Progressive Stoner Metal**  
**Produced by Nick Raskulinecz**  
**Label: Reprise**  
**54:08**

Mastodon have proudly sat in a class of their own for plenty of years now, often designated as the go-to metal band for non-metalheads, to the point that's difficult to even imagine just who their 'competition' might be. Subsequently, *Once More 'Round the Sun* had a lot to live up to, and according to many, it didn't quite get there as the group's safest creation thus far, leaping forward like an alternative radio-friendly mix of their catalogue rather than pushing for anything particularly new. But who cares? The powerful charge is as bloodthirsty as ever,

the trance-inducing instrumentation is as technical as the holy scripture demanded, and the hooks are as dark as they are bright, coming together as yet another solid marble stone to their pedestal already towering above the entire genre itself.

***“Filled to the brim with consistently excellent songs, *Once More 'Round The Sun* serves as a blueprint of how to go commercial without sacrificing one’s artistic identity.”***

**— Sputnikmusic**



## End of Year Lists

#7 Resident Advisor | #7 Thump | #15 The Wild Honey Pie | #18 Gaffa (Sweden) | #18 Passion of the Weiss | #19 Red Bull | #20 Dazed | #20 Pitchfork | #21 PopMatters | #25 SPIN | #25 Variance | #27 Gorilla vs. Bear | #27 LA Music Blog | #18 Juice Nothing

**30 September 2016**  
**Ambient Art Pop**  
**Produced by Nicolas Jaar**  
**Label: Other People**  
**41:47**

Oh, Mr. magical Jaar and his natural ability to smooth sounds until they dance just for him. He placidly lifts you with his wand of infinite ideas then leaves you to hang in the air for whatever extended period of time he deems necessary, patiently watching the build-up, refusing to rush the emotion, awaiting the exact right moment to let you fall. And then he does and you fall and you hit the ground and it feels great. Which nothing new for Jaar to do, sure, but whatever *Sirens* may lack in career progression, it makes up for it with its introspection and awareness,

essentially a 2016 political statement which sides with the youth against those who are voting the world into repetition, mocking their evident inability to learn from history, and then some other stuff in Spanish, I wasn't quite sure.

**“*Sirens*, more than any other previous release, proves that he is every bit as capable as all the artists mentioned above in creating a true masterpiece.”**

**— PopMatters**



COLIN  
STETSON  
AND  
SARAH  
NEUFELD

NEVER  
WERE  
THE  
WAY  
SHE  
WAS

**104**

***COLIN STETSON & SARAH NEUFELD  
NEVER WERE THE WAY SHE WAS***

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Norman Records | #45 The Needle Drop | #16 Juice Nothing*

**28 April 2015**  
**Post-Minimalism Chamber Music**  
**Produced by Hans Bernard**  
**Label: Constellation Records**  
**42:56**

Once upon a time, Colin Stetson and Sarah Neufeld ventured into the studio and *BANG*, this happened: a live instrumental record, boasting their chemistry without relying on any overdubs or loops, weaving their tools in and out of each other like two contradictory mythical creatures making love because some divine intervention told them to. Stetson's frighteningly plodding (more masculine) saxophone smashes abnormal textures on top of Neufeld's gracefully quivering (more feminine) violin strings while each artist reigns in their specialities,

meeting on a distant middle ground, flirtatiously pulsating out ambient thumps to represent the far ends of their separate spectrums, determined to complement one another above all else. And it's perfect. Here's to hoping that they work together again, forever.

**“Stetson and Arcade Fire violinist Sarah Neufeld dart and dovetail elegantly, her playing the piercing counterpoint to his imposing low end.”**

**— Uncut**



**103**  
**CONVERGE**  
**THE DUSK IN US**

theduskinus

CONVERGE

## End of Year Lists

#5 Kerrang | #5 Revolver | #10 Decibel | #22 BLARE | #22 The Alternative | #23 State | #24 Treble | #25 BrooklynVegan | #30 Stereogum | #32 Digital Trends | #44 The Needle Drop | #44 AllMusic | #44 Alternative Press | #26 Juice Nothing

**3 November 2017**

**Metalcore**

**Produced by Kurt Ballou**

**Label: Epitaph | Deathwish**

**43:53**

*The Dusk in Us is the perfect demonstration of a band fully aware of what their fans crave and then force-feeding it to them through tubes shoved deep into every orifice. So metal! And yet, they achieve this beautiful violation without repetitive attacks, rather inching the incisions even further inwards, slicing at the edges of mathematical intricacies whilst only refusing to succumb to the temptations of comfortable melodics. For even the quieter junctures are intensified by a creepy darkness, so crisply produced and spacious to ensure that when the*

*punches come, there's a nice clear path straight towards your throat. As you already know, Converge conquered the scene some time ago and albums like this one only serve to remind us that they still maintain a firm grip on the leash, one-handed, eyes closed, it's simply what they do. How many best albums do they have now?*

***“If the album title seems like a premonition, the stuff coming out of the speakers conveys the emotional context and sonic evacuation Converge have built their legend upon. As they have grown as musicians, writers and humans (with all the baggage that contains), the band still maintain their status as leaders.”***

**— Alternative Press**



TANYA TAGAQ

RETRIBUTION



**102**

**TANYA TAGAQ  
RETRIBUTION**

End of Year Lists

*#36 The Times | #6 Juice Nothing*

**21 October 2016**

**Experimental Inuit Vocal Games Rock**

**Produced by Tanya Tagaq**

**Label: Six Shooter Records**

**47:28**

*Retribution is like drinking some staunch mescaline way past your bedtime, miles from civilisation, now a tiny dot between the spaciousness of nature, realising a little too late that you've joined some Native American ritual where the fire spirits are encouraging you to transform into the wild animal you were always destined to be. And Tanya leads this ceremony, educating you about the politics of her culture and her concerns with climate change without uttering a single word, the epitome of using the voice as an instrument until suddenly you find...*

*a rap song? Yes, there's a rap song here. And yet somehow this doesn't even sound out of place, as it gently wafts into another run of insane ancestral chokes and chants until suddenly you find... a Nirvana cover? Wait, what is this record anyway??*

***“Retribution is immersive, cathartic, potentially even transformative.”***

***— Exclaim!***



**101**

**ST. VINCENT**  
**ST. VINCENT**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Entertainment Weekly | #1 Gigwise | #1 musicOMH | #1 NME | #1 No Ripcord | #1 Slant Magazine | #1 The Guardian | #2 BBC Radio 6 Music | #2 FasterLouder | #2 Paste | #2 TIME | #2 Under the Radar | #3 A.V. Club | #3 Pretty Much Amazing | #17 Juice Nothing*

**25 February 2014**  
**Art Pop Rock**  
**Produced by John Congleton**  
**Label: Loma Vista | Republic**  
**40:04**

Annie Clarke described this imaginative album as “a party record you could play at a funeral,” and, honestly, we could end the review right here. I won’t though! This is Vincent’s fifth release which is also a self-titled affair, completely deserving the name as the lady in question over-stuffs her colourful pillows with an awkward dancefloor appeal in conjunction with a peculiar sense of commercial potential, blossoming as one very “art pop” art pop record, you know? The pop side, for example, is a contorted mess of catchiness, moderately accessible

with confident grooves and a high energy, challenged only by the art side, which is an unorthodox wall of noise, fidgeting anxiously whilst provoking the quirk to max levels of electric eccentricity and eccentric electricity and in that way... it’s kinda strange? It’s also her best work which is always good.

**“It’s an album that manages to remain accessible while still sounding challenging and unconventional, an album that can sound heart-stoppingly beautiful one minute and scratchily acerbic the next and, ultimately, an album that’s impossible to grow bored of.”**

**— musicOMH.com**



## End of Year Lists

*#19 musicOMH | #40 The Guardian | #13 Juice Nothing*

**12 January 2015**  
**Art Chamber Pop**  
**Produced by Jonathan Quarmby**  
**Label: Virgin EMI**  
**50:50**

*Sleeping on the streets of Paris and busking just to afford food doesn't sound like the most comfortable of living circumstances, but it evidently works wonders for artistic inspiration. Let us take a look at Benjamin Clementine, a man whose irregular mellowness could have never sprouted without the dramatic loneliness of being stripped of everything and left empty without a soul to call a friend. His only solace came from his own poetically simple words, led bare by playful piano keys, theatrically expressed with such powerful emotions that you*

*can just about taste the depth of his sadness without ever understanding where it came from. Naturally, these otherworldly vocal melodies sold as heartbroken delicacies could not go unnoticed for long, and so here we are, noticing!*

***“Clementine will no doubt be polarizing for many listeners. There is no question, however, of his raw talent, poeticism, and knack for beguiling melodies, and in this oversaturated market, the true mavericks will always rise above the din.”***

**— AllMusic**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Consequence of Sound | #5 The Ringer | #5 Uproxx | #6 TIME  
#34 Paste | #41 Uncut | #43 Rough Trade | #50 The Quietus | #7  
Juice Nothing

**29 March 2019**  
**Alternative R&B Electropop**  
**Produced by Finneas O'Connell**  
**Label: Darkroom | Interscope**  
**42:48**

As undoubtedly the end-of-the-decade's biggest thing, Billie's name had already been catapulted into the stratosphere long before her debut was a conversation, the eventual release of this collection doing nothing except applying fire to her momentum as she smashed down every festival stage and world record thrown in front of her. By now most people have formed an opinion, but for those of you who know how to listen, know that you really have to **listen** to this one. Her whispered deliveries and ominous pop production barely needs to scratch

your eardrum before creeping you out with something sonically brand new, a refreshing step ahead of whatever's modern right now whilst outsmarting absolutely everyone who wrote her off as an industry puppet. Not bad for a 17-year-old, right? What have you done with your life?

***“It’s a brave and resounding first step for an artist with bags of potential and over the next decade, you’ll no doubt see popular music scrabbling to try and replicate what this album does on every level.”***

**— NME**





**98**

***ALTAR OF PLAGUES  
TEETHED GLORY AND INJURY***

ALTAR OF PLAGUES  
TEETHED GLORY & INJURY

**End of Year Lists**

*#3 The Needle Drop | #7 Juice Nothing*

**30 April 2013**

**Atmospheric Black Post-Metal**

**Produced by Jaime Gomez Arellano**

**Label: Candlelight**

**49:13**

So much of our available black metal market seems misplaced, compelled to create noise out of misguided aggression, a desperate effort to sound “sad” or “evil” or “whatever”. But *Teethed Glory and Injury...* is different. It breaks hearts which then bleed into the upset stomachs of listeners who proceed to wet the rest of their bodies with urine and tears. This illness does not scream for pretend, it screams for help; lonely and in trouble as if trapped in an ugly damp cellar, bursting from pain and terror and all of the other scary things, presented

so slow, so soft, so black, and so damn tragic. But still not as tragic as *Altar of Plagues* splitting up less than two months after this release, making the memorial gift even more depressing, gawd!

**“Altar of Plagues have always implied that the reality they know is bleak, but only on *Teethed Glory and Injury* do we really get a solid idea of how bleak it really is.”**

**— Metalsucks**

**JASON ISBELL**  
**SOUTHEASTERN**

**97**

**JASON ISBELL**  
**SOUTHEASTERN**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 American Songwriter | #4 Amazon | #5 PopMatters | #11 Paste  
#13 eMusic | #26 Uncut | #44 Obscure Sound | #44 NPR Music  
#14 Juice Nothing*

**11 June 2013**  
**Contemporary Folk Americana**  
**Produced by David Cobb**  
**Label: Southeastern**  
**47:18**

*Country music not your preferred drink of choice? Don't even stress about it. Because Southeastern rises beyond that, an album so driven by passion and personal reflections that one might struggle to get through it without a little weepy weep. It's uncomfortable when your guts physically shift. Genres become painfully irrelevant when you grieve. And grieve, you shall, as Jason's powerful deliveries break hearts whilst the clarity of his vulnerable lyrics weigh so heavily on your breath that you can literally feel the oxygen drawing harder, now falling*

*nauseous, destroying your life in the beautiful misery of sadness. It's a rare thing when you feel a record as rich as this.*

***“There’s a real dynamic arc here, not just for the album as a whole, but also within each and every individual song, and whether or not you’ve gravitated toward county music in the past, that unrivaled depth of passion makes this record an absolute essential.”***

**— Absolute Punk**



**DEFTONES**  
DIAMOND  
EYES

**96**

**DEFTONES**  
**DIAMOND EYES**

### End of Year Lists

*#3 Drowned in Sound | #20 Sputnikmusic | #22 Consequence of Sound | #41 DIY | #10 Juice Nothing*

**4 May 2010**

**Alternative Metal**

**Produced by Nick Raskulinecz**

**Label: Reprise**

**41:15**

Typical Deftones conversations always centre around their ability to defy the law of averages by consistently releasing great record after great record after. *Diamond Eyes* is another ridiculous example of that, the band sticking to their established weaponry without becoming too predictable, focusing on chunky hooks and a depth of intellect no matter which way your scalpal can dissect it. Go ahead and cut open the glands of any Deftones offering and you will find an abundance of both estrogen and testosterone which could very well

be their ticket. They compose music that anyone can enjoy regardless of their preferred genres or how well their day is going. Give it a warm embrace or challenge it to a fistfight, it's cool, it's ready.

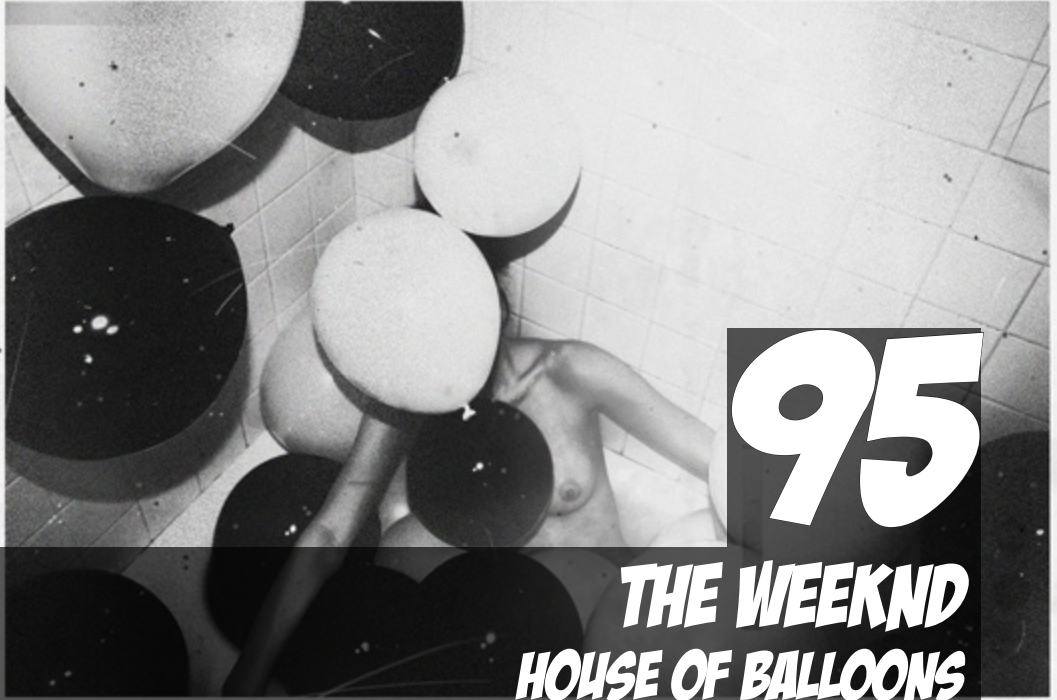
***“Diamond Eyes is full of layers and dimensions, making it an auditory treat that listeners will want to continue to indulge themselves in. This is an album you can blast from my car stereo and then later dissect through headphones.”***

**— Absolute Punk**

# TheWeeknd

## HouseOfBalloons

1 HIGH FOR THIS 2 WHAT YOU NEED 3 HOUSE OF BALLOONS / GLASS TABLE GIRLS 4 THE MORNING  
5 WICKED GAMES 6 THE PARTY & THE AFTER PARTY 7 COMING DOWN 8 LOFT MUSIC 9 THE KNOWING



# 95

**THE WEEKND**  
**HOUSE OF BALLOONS**

### End of Year Lists

#1 Complex | #1 FACT Magazine | #2 One Thirty BPM | #2 Spinner  
#5 FILTER | #5 Stereogum | #6 A.V. Club | #6 PopMatters | #7  
Billboard | #8 The Guardian | #8 The Line of Best Fit | #9 DIY | #10  
Cokemachineglow | #10 Pitchfork | #10 Slant | #12 Juice Nothing

20 March 2011

Contemporary R&B

Produced by Doc McKinney | Cirkut | Illangelo

Label: XO

49:34

Before *The Weeknd* was a household name, this mixtape dropped and the ears of the underground pricked up in fear, well aware that we were all sitting on an active volcano. The sexual flavour was darkened by ominous basslines mimicking the worst comedown anyone has ever had, crashing you through the floor as the corrupt production dragged you down, daring you to cry as if you still had access to your lungs. But while you listened to the vocals slowly shovelling soft soil upon your face, you knew that nothing was ever going to happen again.

Now step back to look at the bigger picture. Contemporary R&B has had a persistently impressive decade, forever growing itself upon itself as time went on, but if you check out the foundations, a good argument could be made for this debut standing as one of the very first and most influential seeds of the lot.

***“The group’s penchant for druggy atmospheric is mirrored in their lyrical content, which is overtly sexual, narcotics-focused, and occasionally downright frightening.”***

**— Pitchfork**





## End of Year Lists

*#2 Sputnikmusic | #14 Vulture | #25 Flavorwire | #26 Grantland  
(Steven Hyden) | #47 Wondering Sound | #63 musicOMH | #67  
PopMatters | #21 Juice Nothing*

**18 February 2014**

**Emo**

**Produced by The Hotelier**

**Label: Tiny Engines**

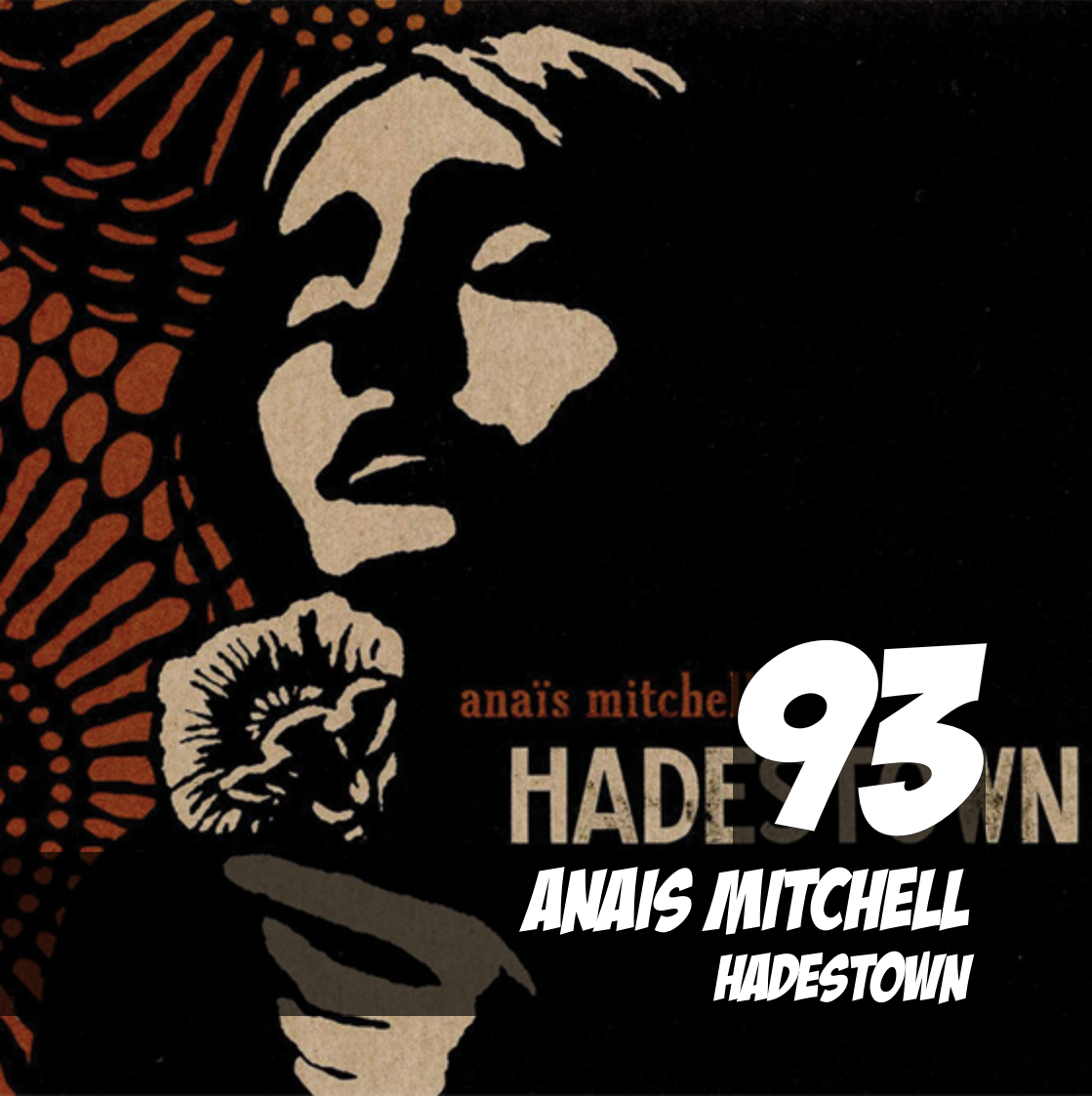
**36:15**

The excessive drama of the emo genre can be a bit touch and go, often slightly pathetic and too insecure for my liking, whilst the dedicated fans annoyingly swear that no one but band-x understands them, ignoring the fact that a million copies sold would indicate otherwise. The style rose, fell, then appeared to die in modern years, except evidently not whatsoever, I'm talking crap. Here's The Hotelier with their sophomore effort, an album that followed the blueprint precisely, yet beat the trend with passionately fresh vocal deliveries and technical riffs, each

so authentically heartfelt that the entire subculture made sudden sense to me. Wait, I get it! Anger can be a constructive motivator! And my therapist said that crying is supposed to be really healthy too!

***“It is all about being strong. It reaches out and tries to help make sense of it all. It’s a comforting empathy. The stories are intensely personal but are so easily transferable beyond their original inspiration.”***

**— Sputnikmusic**



## End of Year Lists

#41 Paste | #5 Juice Nothing

**26 April 2010**  
**Contemporary Chamber Folk**  
**Produced by Todd Sickafoose**  
**Label: Righteous Babe**  
**57:17**

*Hadestown is one of the most solid and true concept albums ever made. It's a sultry folk opera which revolves around a poverty-stricken hell-like town, told with an Americana folksy flavour connected with an expressive dialogue between many reoccurring characters, perhaps the most notable of which being played by Justin Vernon from Bon Iver himself. It's an ambitious and very original (borderline Biblical!) tale as you find yourself immersed by love and loss and all of the components which make a narrative great, uncovering deeper treasures per every listen.*

*Do yourself a favour and go read the entry on Wikipedia, it's not just some throwaway plot whatsoever.*

***“Artfully conceived, articulated, and produced, Hadestown raises Mitchell’s creative bar exponentially: there isn’t anything else remotely like it.”***

**— AllMusic**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Time Out London | #4 Digital Spy | #5 Pigeons & Planes | #6 NME | #6 The Guardian | #15 musicOMH | #23 The Telegraph | #34 No Ripcord | #36 Uncut | #40 The Needle Drop | #48 Q Magazine  
#15 Juice Nothing

21 July 2014

Synthpop

Produced by Ian Sherwin | Elly Jackson

Label: Polydor

41:27

Five years after her lauded dancey debut dropped *La Roux* achieved the impossible: an even better record! Disregarding expectations for another singles-orientated album of bangers, Elly Jackson opted to focus upon a laid back, light summery piece which stood tall as a solid unit, each sleek song sunshining their joy without outshining one other, flirting with the cheerful line between electropop and nu-disco and flaring up with a mouth full of flavour. And, even deeper than that, it's a tropical sex record at its core, every track leading a holiday fling where you

find yourself intimately embracing a stranger, apprehensively melting your heart which falls a little too hard for this character who you know you'll never see again. Which is kinda sad. But also... so much fun!

***“In truth, the songwriting quality never really dips. Almost sickeningly overburdened with fantastic tunes, *Trouble in Paradise* may well be not just a triumph against the odds, but the best pop album we’ll hear this year.”***

**— The Guardian**

APHEX TWIN	
SYRO	
minipops 67 [source field mix].....	120.2
XMAS_EVET10 [thanaton3 mix].....	120
produk 29.....	101
4 bit 9d api+e+6.....	126.26
180db.....	130
CIRCLONT6A [syrobonkus mix].....	141.98
fz pseudotimestretch+e+3.....	138.85
CIRCLONT14 [shrymoming mix].....	152.97
syro u473t8+e [piezoluminescence mix].....	141.98
PAPAT4 [pineal mix].....	155
s950txl6wasrl0 [earth portal mix].....	163.97
aisatsana.....	102
London venue hire for planning meeting	
with international team.....	£0.00143
Promotion team in Germany.....	£0.00331
Outdoor postering in Italy.....	£0.00066
Refreshments and lunch for promo team	
album listening in Paris.....	£0.00043
Hotel in Seattle for album playback meeting....	£0.00049
Postage costs for US radio promotion mailout...	£0.00304
Packing CD and booklet.....	£0.06192
Website bandwidth costs.....	£0.00204
Venue and equipment costs for	
London listening event.....	£0.00163
Online advertising in Norway.....	£0.00099
Promotion and marketing team in Norway.....	£0.00166
Online advertising in Australia.....	£0.00338
Promo CDs for US press promotion.....	£0.00018
Hotel rooms for international label managers...	£0.00311
Promo CDs for US radio promotion.....	£0.00184
A2 retail poster for Japan.....	£0.00035
Digitisation from tape archive copy of	
The Making of Windowlicker.....	£0.0009
Refreshments for NYC listening party.....	£0.00073
Other online advertising.....	£0.01426
Online advertising in Sweden.....	£0.00099
Print advertising including	
The Fader / Vice and others.....	£0.09357
CD-Rs for UK radio promotion.....	£0.00035
Small ledger receipts for pre-orders	
at independent retail.....	£0.00365
Outdoor postering in Berlin / Cologne /	
Hamburg and other cities.....	£0.0265
Average distribution charge.....	£1.36306
Taxis for planning meeting day in London.....	£0.00057
Radio advertising in France.....	£0.01325



## End of Year Lists

#1 Bleep | #1 The Wire | #3 Dummy | #3 Uncut | #4 NME | #4 Pitchfork | #4 Resident Advisor | #4 The Guardian | #6 No Ripcord | #6 Wondering Sound | #8 Billboard | #8 Clash | #9 PopMatters | #9 Pretty Much Amazing | #10 Q Magazine | #3 Juice Nothing

**22 September 2014**

**IDM**

**Produced by Richard D James**

**Label: Warp**

**64:31**

After 13 years of silence, Aphex Twin's new album was announced, and followers began to fidget. Many music churches still praised Richard D. James as the God of electronic, hence why fingers were chewed in prayer, anxious that our saviour might fuck this up; that he may be potentially capable of human error after all this time. What a silly concern, in hindsight. Because Syro was not only the same restless Aphex Twin looping no distinguishable parts within meticulously textured patterns, but it evolved up to an even higher space of consideration, his

most accessibly listenable record to date, suddenly aware of the people and fixated on engrossing us rather than alienating us like he had done so many times before. And then everyone relaxed in unison once again. Aphex Twin remains in complete control.

**“Richard D. James has successfully crafted one of the most stunning records of his career, and he did so by exercising a deft amount of self-control.”**

**— Pretty Much Amazing**





LEMON DEMON  
SPIRIT  
PHONE

90

**LEMON DEMON  
SPIRIT PHONE**

**End of Year Lists**

*#31 The Needle Drop | #15 Juice Nothing*

**29 February 2016**  
**New Wave Indietronica Synthpop**  
**Produced by Neil Cicierega**  
**Label: Needlejuice**  
**59:17**

Like an adorable child who found the cookie jar, this is a toxic helping of 8-bit hyperactivity, tirelessly running circles around you, impossible to catch whilst geeking out beneath a foam of hilariously bizarre ideas and robotic campiness. It is a performance piece of insanity set to maximum, an entirely deliberate onslaught of colour overdosing, one which you are unlikely to survive without some tummy ache of repercussions. And yet it's not a one-trick gimmick of excess either, refusing to favour these perky quirks over the dedication of careful

songwriting, throwing relentlessly retro hooks and fabulously offbeat wit into every song, pricking at the most peculiar underbelly of the tongue until all surrounding teeth rot and fall out, curiously leaving the most refreshing aftertaste in their wake. When combing through the decade, I struggle to think of a record more uniquely exciting than this.

**“The project’s catchiest and most eccentric set of songs yet.  
Very nerdy, very catchy.”  
— The Needle Drop**



## End of Year Lists

#8 Amazon | #15 musicOMH | #19 Spinner | #31 Clash | #37 Uncut  
#41 Rolling Stone | #45 One Thirty BPM | #50 The Needle Drop  
#2 Juice Nothing

**25 July 2011**  
**Electro Art Pop**  
**Produced by Little Dragon**  
**Label: Peacefrog**  
**43:17**

Throw on your shiniest clothes and shove a breath mint into your pocket, we're going dancing down the street. This decade came with an abundance of electropop records to choose from, but very few (if any) hit the g-spot quite as expertly as this one. It's an alluring fantasy of sensual audios with no ulterior motives, clean-cut entertainment which effortlessly charms you into bed then locates those elusive nerve endings with precision and care. And to that tune, song after song, you are stimulated by a consistent happy rhythm, never too fast nor too slow, eager to serve,

just right, perfect even, until you unhurriedly reach your climactic end and then you take a short break, basking in the afterglow of musical pleasures, already planning your next round.

**“Though consistently ground-breaking and lyrically challenging, Ritual Union never feels like hard work.”**

**— The Telegraph**



## End of Year Lists

*#24 The Needle Drop | #54 Pretty Much Amazing | #9 Juice Nothing*

**11 June 2012**

**Electropop**

**Produced by Claes Björklund**

**Label: Cooperative**

**43:29**

In a world where anybody can make music in their bedroom while the record labels are grappling (and losing) against piracy, eventually only the most creative of artists will have the power to stand out. One decent approach of doing so can be found with the multimedia project of Kin, a testament as to how far we have come in modern-day expression, selling each of these nine witchy songs with an accompanying video, linking together, telling an unconventional story where Jonna dances sexually in her underwear with some big humanoid Komondor

dog creatures and then I dunno. Anyway, such an original experience did demand a certain level of interest, and the dreamy snowflakes floated into critics' ears, freezing their attention with the familiar yet fresh approach to the popular electro child's playstyle, iced by those sultry female vocals on the top. "Hey, what a delicious debut you have there!" is what somebody may have said at the time.

***"There is now a lot of R&B influenced electronic pop music around, increasingly from Scandinavia, and it seems to be the 'go to' sound of left of centre pop music in the middle of 2012. The good news for the duo, however, is that their particular take on it puts them right near the front of a crowded field."***

**— musicOMH.com**



**87**

**ANDY STOTT**  
**LUXURY PROBLEMS**

## End of Year Lists

#3 Beats Per Minute | #5 The 405 | #8 Tiny Mix Tapes | #13  
Exclaim! | #14 Pitchfork | #16 Cokemachineglow | #18 The Wire  
#20 Gorilla vs. Bear | #23 Urban Outfitters | #28 PopMatters | #28  
The Quietus | #29 Obscure Sound | #21 Juice Nothing

**29 October 2012**

**Dub Techno**

**Produced by Andy Stott**

**Label: Modern Love**

**48:49**

*Like some washing machine hooked up to narcotics, this layered entity loops its internal system over and over so many times that it is surely some sort of a ploy. Sounds of hollow pipes churn within your brain until you accidentally start counting down from 10, slowly falling into a trance-like state, strangely comfortable for no other reason than this record's own creepy motives. But while it relies heavily on the unity of repetitive droning, ambient beauty, and human voices to simultaneously relax and blow your mind, it will still knock you off course now and*

*again by jolting your slumber with something peculiarly out of place. Don't overthink this, it's just a little nudge to remind you who is steering this game, come back and sit over here, let's keep going.*

***“Though he’s had plenty of strong releases in the past, this one has the inspired feeling of an artist truly finding his footing--a breakthrough, in other words.”***

***— Resident Advisor***





**86**

**ANGEL OLSEN**  
**ALL MIRRORS**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Albumism | #1 Treble | #2 Paste | #2 Stereogum | #3 Rough Trade | #3 The Skinny | #4 Consequence of Sound | #6 Drift | #11 Uproxx | #26 Uncut | #6 Juice Nothing

**4 October 2019**  
**Chamber Art Pop**  
**Produced by John Congleton**  
**Label: Jagjaguwar**  
**48:33**

Angel Olsen has been progressively ascending her own artistic mountain throughout the decade, but it feels unfathomable that *All Mirrors* won't be documented as the sound of her conquering some sort of peak somewhere out there. The emotional landscape is layered thick without any cheap tricks, favouring an intellectual compositional exploration to the very boundaries of this dark and sombre mood, never intending to escape the black and white central core but definitely toying with how far this borderline can bend to her will. And, in doing so,

she's birthed a work of art which could easily be remembered in the future as a bonafide 2010's classic, as I live out the rest of my days in deep regret, mumbling on my deathbed about how I should have placed her higher on this list. It's just about as good as absolutely anything.

***“Her sad-girl persona, thrust upon her unwittingly by music media, transforms into its most dramatic form. It’s a brazen sadness echoed through crashing symbols and spacious synths. The songs are devastating, but also nourishing: it’s a whole new version of Olsen.”***

**— NOW Magazine**



**GORILLAZ  
PLASTIC  
BEACH**

**85**

**GORILLAZ  
PLASTIC BEACH**

## End of Year Lists

#3 One Thirty BPM | #4 Consequence of Sound | #6 The Needle Drop  
#7 Q Magazine | #8 Rhapsody SoundBoard | #10 Slant  
#10 Spinner | #11 musicOMH | #15 Amazon | #18 Uncut | #19 No  
Ripcord | #22 PopMatters | #23 Spin | #12 Juice Nothing

**9 March 2010**  
**Electro Art Pop**  
**Produced by Gorillaz**  
**Label: Parlophone**  
**56:46**

Guys! You guys! It's the third Gorillaz release, you guys! And it's the closest they have come thus far (and since) to sounding like these songs were written by an actual cartoon band. They illustrate their quirky world with shimmering colours and connected themes while summoning an eclectic list of guests, many of whom you have never mentioned in the same sentence before. It's such a treat when you open the lucky packet only to find something so serious about its craft yet not serious about being taken seriously whatsoever, effortlessly skipping through genres

without straying too far from the weird poppy experience they intended from the very beginning. Oh, and you want to talk about Albarn quickly? His versatile and virtually flawless resume uses a tiny font size to fit on a single page now, inarguably one of the most impressive careers that the modern commercial world can offer, with this release proudly highlighted in pink.

***“Not just one of the best records of 2010, but a release to stand alongside the greatest Albarn’s ever been involved with and a new benchmark for collaborative music as a whole.”***

**— BBC Music**



**84**

**CHELSEA WOLFE**  
**HISS SPUN**

## End of Year Lists

#4 Revolver | #10 Treble | #15 Earbuddy | #18 Kerrang | #42 State  
#43 Louder Than War | #59 Drowned in Sound | #11 Juice Nothing

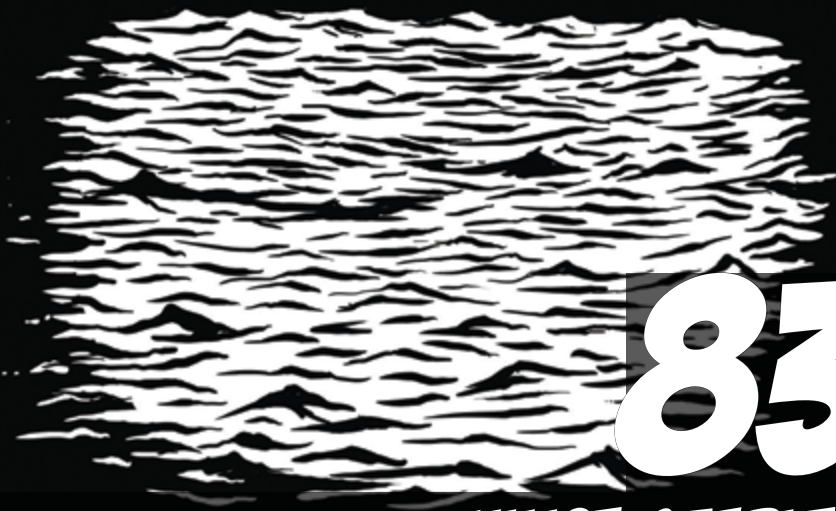
**22 September 2017**  
**Gothic Doom Rock Metal**  
**Produced by Ben Chisholm**  
**Label: Sargent House**  
**48:19**

Chelsea has forever been creeping towards a simplified doom incarnation of her wicked ways, but on *Hiss Spun*, it feels like she has finally arrived, setting up a convent where she can weave her sinister drones in the hidden safety of the shadows until they grow too big for her hands and escape into a blind noise of utter panic. The threat of being trampled by the hooves of sludge should be anything but compatible with the delicate allure of Wolfe's cold vocals, but instead, they scheme together in the most dangerous of manners, upsetting our

pleasures like a ritualistic orgy inside of a nightmare. The world no longer has a choice, and we must all bow down before our modern-day Queen of Darkness, paying respects to these evil magics because it would be futile to try and stop her at this point.

***“After years of delivering on her promise, it comes as no surprise that *Hiss Spun* is as good as it is. The instrumental tracks dance around Wolfe’s soaring vocals and ultimately collide with them perfectly to create a collection of songs that are a joy to listen to.”***

**— The 405**



**83**

**VINCE STAPLES**  
**SUMMERTIME '06**

## End of Year Lists

#4 Billboard | #4 Pitchfork | #4 Slant Magazine | #4 Stereogum  
#4 Treble | #5 Blare | #5 SPIN | #6 A.V. Club | #6 Gorilla vs. Bear  
#6 Reverb | #8 Loud and Quiet | #9 PopMatters | #9 Variance | #10  
Consequence of Sound | #10 The Daily Beast | #18 Juice Nothing

**30 June 2015**

**Hardcore West Coast Hip Hop**

**Produced by Corey “Blacksmith” Smyth & No I.D.**

**Label: ARTium | Blacksmith | Def Jam**

**59:05**

Vince’s approach of indifference may appear slightly colourless but there is an ominous aura to his dreariness which slots in perfectly with the overall theme of this extraordinarily accomplished debut album. By applying short songs as quick jabs, these lyrics tell the coming-of-age story about Staples’ youth growing up in the Californian hoods, watching his innocence fade as his awareness of crime ultimately dominates his daily routines. Hard-hitting stuff, sure, but even this sobering tale cannot derail the true hero behind this record: the music itself. No I.D.’s

beats achieve a smooth, unpredictable ride without relying on flashiness to steal the show, betraying no desire to be innovative because innovation would require too much effort. And that is the overall lesson here, delivered by either the voice or the backtrack. Just be cool.

**“It’s a major triumph disguised as a minor one--60 minutes of lean, inventive, important rap music that never pats itself on the back for being any of those things.”**

**— The A.V. Club**





LEMONADE

82

BEYONCE  
LEMONADE

## End of Year Lists

#1 AOL Entertainment | #1 Billboard | #1 Complex | #1 Consequence of Sound | #1 Cosmopolitan | #1 Digital Spy | #1 Entertainment Weekly | #1 Idolator | #1 InStyle | #1 People | #1 PopMatters | #1 Pretty Much Amazing | #1 Rolling Stone | #19 Juice Nothing

**23 April 2016**  
**Contemporary R&B Pop**  
**Produced by Beyoncé**  
**Label: Parkwood | Columbia**  
**45:42**

The way in which everyone has idolised *Lemonade* as Beyoncé's most remarkable achievement is a little overblown, wouldn't you say? Listen again and tell me, is it not essentially a sum as strong as the guest stars it relies on? Don't Hurt Yourself is fundamentally a Jack White song. 6 Inch stinks of The Weekend. And I can't even hear Beyoncé when it comes to the archetypal James Blake composition Forward. Regardless, these audio contributions are only half the attack, as this album's cathartic theme does deserve the acclaim alone. It's our

planet's biggest superstar seeking revenge on her husband's infidelity, brutally airing his dirty betrayal with more fiery attitude and diverse passion than any of her records combined, fighting to get her pride back by cutting her lover's name up to shreds. Whether factual or a publicity stunt, it's an intense move which only pulls us deeper into the life of inarguably this decade's queen of the entire music world.

***“All over *Lemonade*, Beyoncé is describing her own personal reality, on her terms and informed by her worldview. That the album simultaneously pushes mainstream music into smarter, deeper places is simply a reminder of why she remains pop's queen.”***

**— The A.V. Club**



MIRANDA  
LAMBERT  
PLATINUM

81

MIRANDA LAMBERT  
PLATINUM

## End of Year Lists

#4 *Cosmopolitan* | #5 *Rolling Stone* | #8 *Wondering Sound* | #12  
*Pazz & Jop* | #15 *Amazon* | #19 *SPIN* | #32 *American Songwriter*  
#32 *AllMusic* | #32 *NPR Music* | #28 *Juice Nothing*

**3 June 2014**

**Contemporary Country**

**Produced by Frank Liddell, Chuck Ainlay & Glenn Worf**

**Label: RCA Nashville**

**58:15**

When you smash your truck into a Nashville country album that dares to clock in at two minutes shy of an hour, you'd be forgiven in assuming that this may be a little too much South for one sitting. But the pure consistency and brave versatility of these songs have nothing to prove to you, and incidentally, prove everything following that exact same mentality. Miranda is as Miranda does, she ultimately had one helluva decade beyond even this, and all she needed to successfully carry Platinum to the end was her and herself, one endearing personality

stuffed full with her witty tales of living past the 30-year mark, sparkling with her cheeky smile popped on top. Although her arrogant flirtations don't hurt much neither.

***“Her characters in these songs--which feature some of the most incisive songwriting in any genre--are complex, self-confident and self-lacerating all at once, and most crucially, completely knowing and in on the joke.”***

**— The New York Times**



## End of Year Lists

#7 Drowned in Sound | #8 BrooklynVegan | #10 The Ringer | #26 Uproxx | #27 The Skinny | #30 Under the Radar | #39 The Needle Drop | #40 Stereogum | #42 SPIN | #65 Noisey | #74 Uncut | #88 Les Inrocks | #17 Juice Nothing

**28 April 2017**

**Indie Rock**

**Produced by Feist & Mocky**

**Label: Universal**

**53:28**

*Pleasure sounds like a lengthy, unusual collection which is pruned together using to-the-point low-key compositions, stripped naked then hushed into a compassionate solitude. Pleasure sounds like it's detached and self-absorbed, yet joylessly tempting you towards itself in an aura of lonely intimacy. Pleasure sounds like a restless quiet which gradually intensifies within its delicate restraint, organising a suspenseful pressure that never quite reaches a climax, like an album full of someone unable to scream. Pleasure sounds like a rich cream intentionally*

*polluted by lo-fi dust. Pleasure sounds like one long line of unpredictable side steps, an empty space of highlights, a depressed floor with no weak points, a delayed reaction. Pleasure sounds like pleasure.*

***“Many of the songs are slow-building numbers that gradually swell to a heightened moment of release. But Feist is too gifted a songwriter to ever need to rely on a mere formula; each time, the payoff is delightfully unexpected.”***

**— Entertainment Weekly**

AVAILABLE IN STEREO ONLY



SACRED BONES  
RECORDS

SBR-134

# Jenny Hval

an LP recorded in 2014

## *Apocalypse, girl*

SIDE A: Kingsize; Take Care of Yourself; That Battle

IS Over; White Underground; Heaven

SIDE B: Why This?; Some Days; Sabbath;

Angels and Anaemia; Holy Land

# 79

**JENNY HVAL**  
**APOCALYPSE, GIRL**

## End of Year Lists

#3 Vulture | #6 The Skinny | #8 The 405 | #9 The Vinyl Factory  
#10 Drowned in Sound | #14 Stereogum | #16 The Quietus | #18  
Norman Records | #20 No Ripcord | #23 Tiny Mix Tapes | #32 The  
Guardian | #33 Crack Magazine | #12 Juice Nothing

**9 June 2015**

**Experimental Art Pop**

**Produced by Lasse Marhaug**

**Label: Sacred Bones | Su Tissue**

**38:44**

Listening to any Jenny Hval album is like enduring the freakiest, most uncomfortable sex you've ever committed to. She is so liberated from any normal person's apprehension towards intimacy, that she's ignorant as to how perverse her melodic utterances are, let alone how much they might upset any conservative ear within listening distance. But even as your shoulders hunch in a defensive wince, there is no denying her erotic musings to be so casually poetic that your attention will become engrossed rather than grossed out, swallowed by the placid

ambience which gently thrusts her provocative corruptions inside of you, whilst the concepts between abstract lunacy and commercial tranquillity don't appear to be that far apart anymore.

**“With Norwegian noise artist Lasse Marhaug producing, Hval walks a tightrope over melodic, sometimes lush pop music surrounded by dissonance straight out of a horror film.”**

**— Boston Globe**



**78****BLANCK MASS  
WORLD EATER**

## End of Year Lists

#3 Bleep | #6 Loud and Quiet | #16 No Ripcord | #26 PopMatters  
#32 Mixmag | #36 Fopp | #39 Sputnikmusic | #41 The Skinny | #46  
Treble | #64 Uncut | #91 Under the Radar | #99 Drowned in Sound  
#100 Rough Trade | #5 Juice Nothing

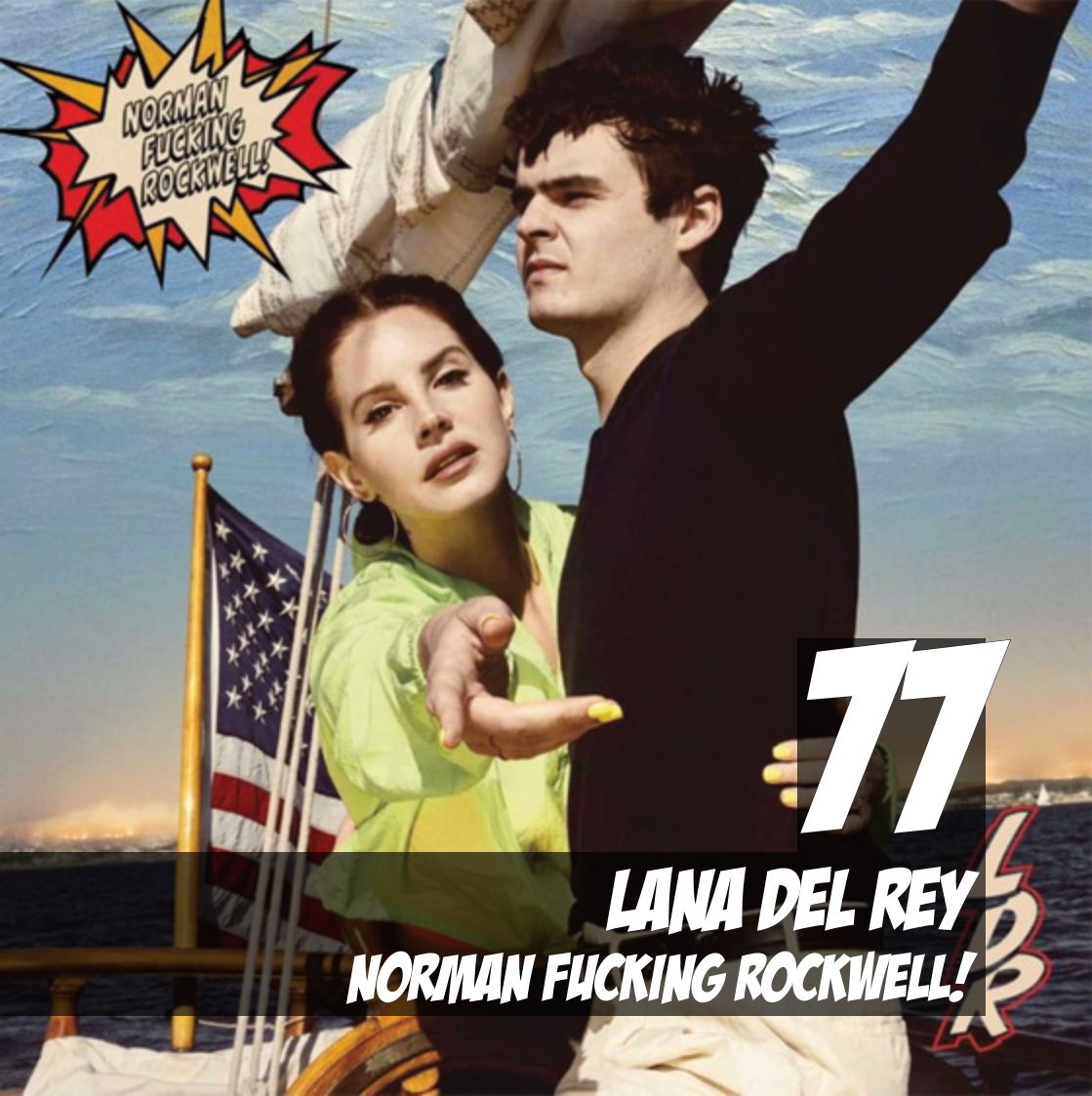
**3 March 2017**  
**Post Electro-Industrial**  
**Produced by Benjamin Power**  
**Label: Sacred Bones**  
**49:07**

*World Eater* runs fierce and bloodthirsty at full charge, packing a rich plethora of jittery agitations into your open wounds, refusing to leave any breathing holes until the stress pops the staples and a frenzy of anarchic shards vomit out of you, scattering upright at your feet. But you will not stop dancing. This is because, no matter how hard and scary Benjamin Power's third solo album may be, it is not executed relentlessly so, electing to generously smear an abundance of peaceful elation straight on top of the chaos, manufacturing relief by

never fully abandoning its core human elements. The conclusion is never intolerable nor painful, but rather the soundtrack to a heavenly rave where all are welcome to the end of the world with open arms.

***“World Eater represents a true stylistic leap. It’s a mammoth collection of songs that carve out a unique niche between apocalyptic anxiety and brief, cathartic bursts of ecstasy--a feeling that should resonate with just about everybody these days.”***

**— The A.V. Club**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Stereogum | #1 The Ringer | #1 Uproxx | #4 TIME | #5 Albumism  
#5 Uncut | #7 MOJO | #9 Consequence of Sound | #19 Paste | #37  
Treble | #4 Juice Nothing

**30 August 2019**

**Art Pop**

**Produced by Jack Antonoff**

**Label: Polydor | Interscope**

**67:38**

Unafraid of turning into a parody of herself (which will probably be her ultimate downfall eventually), Lana's sixth album is the most Lana that Lana has ever been, so much so that it hurts. She's shoved every mood she's ever had (read: she's one mood) into her mouth then she chewed it right up without so much of a hint of a smile. She then draws long and hard on her cigarette, bathing the contents in smoke then squeezing out as much juice as she can through her teeth. Oh hey, there's a surprising amount of juice in there! Norman Fucking Rockwell!!!

And if any complaint is to be heard, it's most likely going to be focused upon the bloated length, let's be honest. However, the track ordering is so precisely thought-out that each song means something different per listen, which perhaps is not enough to be called her best work... but, damn, you know what? It also might be!

**“The long-awaited Norman Fucking Rockwell is even more massive and majestic than everyone hoped it would be (...) No other songwriter around does such an expert job of building up elaborate romantic fantasies, and then burning them to the ground.”**

**— Rolling Stone**



## End of Year Lists

*#8 The Daily Beast | #11 Sputnikmusic | #83 Louder Than War | #12 Juice Nothing*

**20 October 2017**

**Alternative Indie Emo Rock**

**Produced by Mike Sapone**

**Label: Procrastinate! Music Traitors**

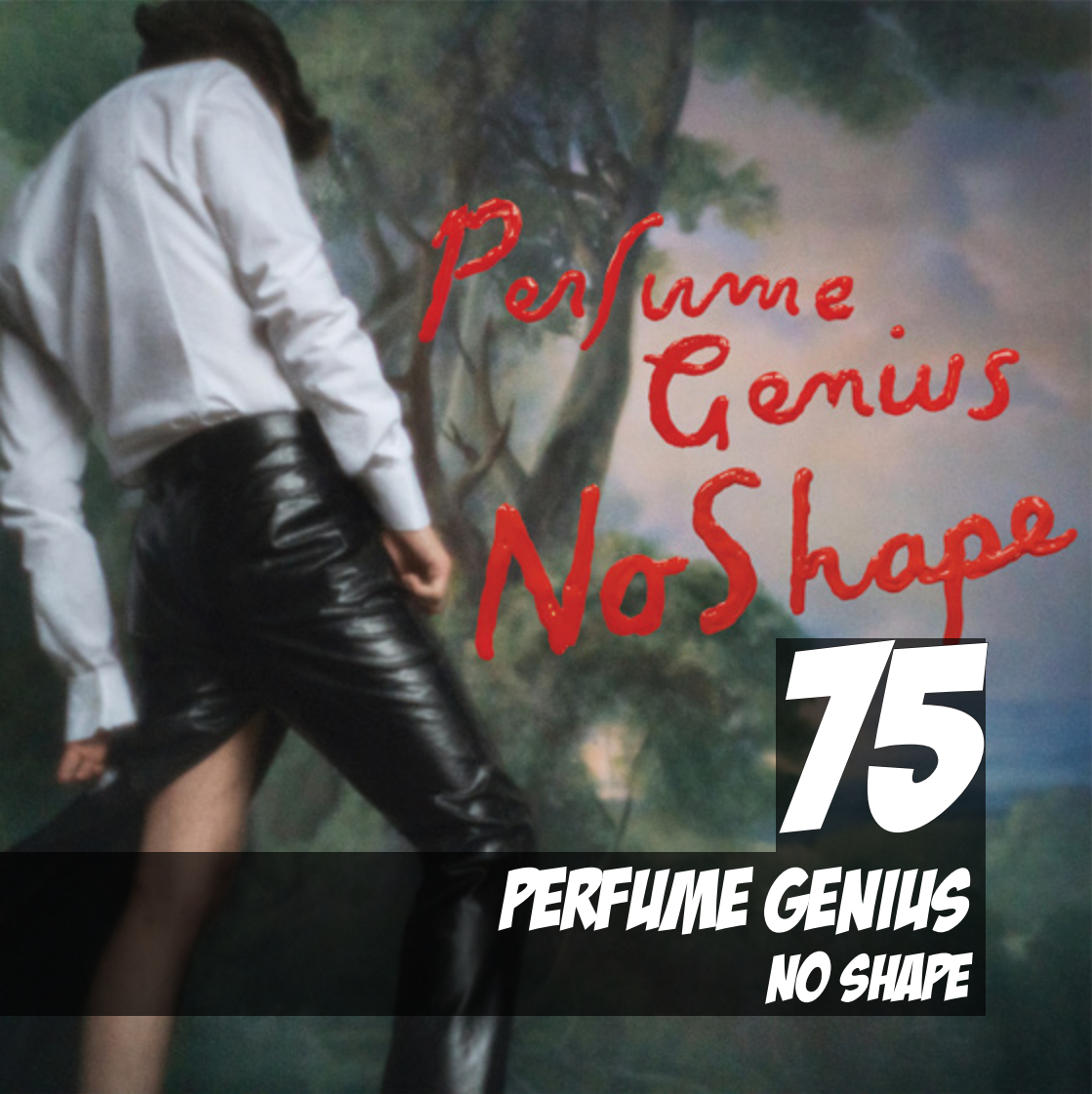
**61:22**

After an eight-year hiatus, the early-2000s emo pioneers Brand New returned, except now sprouted up into full-grown adults. By unifying cohesively restrained tracks with a sparsely haunting production, the band constructed an album using the principles of a feature film, where the journey creeps forward as any determined narrative should when approaching a thing which feels very wrong indeed. They switched the obsolete emo model for a softer grungy feel, practising a deeper intellect to generate an enigmatic pit of hopeless solemn, serving

their fans a greater meal than what was ordered while opening their doors wide to accommodate the new customers lining up outside. Certainly, I appreciate the artistic dignity of going out on a high, but if the rumours of an imminent break up are true, then this is such a shame because Science Fiction is the sound of a resuscitated group who just discovered the best pasture of their career.

**“A stunning, sprawling sucker-punch of a finale equally amenable to die-hards and newcomers, Science Fiction is a worthy (if bittersweet) send-off to one of the most brutally honest, forward-thinking rock bands of the new millennium.”**

**— Spin**



## End of Year Lists

#3 Baeble Music | #3 Digital Trends | #3 Time | #4 Stereogum | #4 The Independent | #4 The Skinny | #5 God Is In The TV | #5 The 405 | #5 The Guardian | #6 Earbuddy | #6 Esquire (US) | #6 NPR Music | #8 BBC News | #8 musicOMH | #80 Juice Nothing

**5 May 2017**

**Art Pop**

**Produced by Blake Mills**

**Label: Matador**

**43:14**

*Perfume Genius once again lives up to his name by revealing a set of tracks so strong that he could only be considered a true creative genius plus he probably also smells very nice. And much like all of his previous threads, No Shape analyses what worked with his prior offerings then amplifies those elements by polishing the production and glistening the commercial value without fully scrubbing out the demons that live within. There's a definite pattern of progression from record to record with this guy, yet he never sounds like he's pushing to get there, simply*

*another foot in front of the other in the man's natural evolution and, once again, making a total success of it too. Perhaps this is even his greatest record yet.*

***“Mike Hadreas takes a scalpel to the inner-workings of his creative brain, and the love that feeds it. An absolutely flooring record from once-in-a-generation talent.”***

**— DIY Magazine**





**74**

**SWANS  
THE SEER**

### End of Year Lists

#1 Cokemachineglow | #1 The Quietus | #3 Tiny Mix Tapes | #4 No Ripcord | #4 Stereogum | #5 Consequence of Sound | #5 Pitchfork  
#5 PopMatters | #6 TIME | #7 A.V. Club | #7 MAGNET | #7 Pazz & Jop | #7 SPIN | #8 Obscure Sound | #88 Juice Nothing

**28 August 2012**  
**Experimental Post-Rock**  
**Produced by Michael Gira**  
**Label: Young God**  
**119:13**

The Seer relentlessly repeats itself so much that it exhausts whilst hypnotizing the best of us like a fever dream where the creature on the artwork infects you with rabies. Now there's a big hole in your skin, itchy and irritating as well as pulsating the most astonishing hue, flaring up with pain then pushing you over the edge. Which is the Swans ethos exactly: beauty meets torture. A severe beating which rewards your stamina, the only relief to be found when it does absolutely anything at all. It tires you only to shake you violently awake. It sends you down the wrong

path only to shout at you for doing so. You don't listen to this album, you take it on. You could never prepare yourself for it, and if you survive it, you will never ever forget it.

***“This album redefines Swans by gathering the best of its past and re-centering the music on impulse and interplay, built with a preternatural sense of how long to let a section develop before moving on to the next idea.”***

**— Consequence of Sound**



## End of Year Lists

#2 Clash | #3 Gigwise | #5 NME | #7 DIY | #7 Rough Trade | #7 The Guardian | #9 BBC | #9 Time Out London | #12 The Fly | #14 Under the Radar | #18 No Ripcord | #25 The 405 | #26 musicOMH | #26 Piccadilly Records | #37 The Needle Drop | #8 Juice Nothing

**25 May 2012**

**Art Indie Pop**

**Produced by Charlie Andrew**

**Label: Infectious**

**48:42**

Believe it or not, this is alt-J's debut. "No," you say. "Impossible!". It's true! Somehow, this band's first record is so artsy smartsy and self-assured of its own uniqueness that I don't fully trust they found their sound. Their sound found them! Which makes about as much sense as the whole debut point to begin with. But, basically, it's like they've used their youthful wisdom to build a rollercoaster—perhaps not be the most exhilarating rollercoaster you've experienced in your whole life, but a fun rollercoaster all the same. And just when you think you

can predict the rest of your journey, a huge dip comes out of nowhere, and in that second you realise you didn't know anything all along. The rollercoaster was playing you. You were the roller coaster. That's the exact second I'm talking about here. That's what this album is.

***“Alt-J’s bizarre pop is ultimately rooted solidly in pathos, in a sort of blighted redemption. They favor cacophony for its ability to offset silence, enjoy spiraling out of control for its appreciation of the meticulous.”***

**— PopMatters**



## End of Year Lists

#3 MOJO | #8 Billboard | #10 Q Magazine | #11 American  
Songwriter | #14 Spinner | #16 The Needle Drop | #19 NME | #20  
Spin | #26 Rhapsody SoundBoard | #28 DIY | #33 Stereogum | #37  
Under the Radar | #39 One Thirty BPM | #11 Juice Nothing

**13 April 2010**  
**Neo-Psychedelia Indie Pop**  
**Produced by Sonic Boom**  
**Label: Columbia**  
**43:53**

*Ladies and Gentleman, this is what it sounds like when a commercially popular and financially successful band rejects their debut and rejects their fame and rejects their formula, screeching to a halt and running away at the second hurdle. To top a media explosion as enormous as Oracular Spectacular seemed impossible, hence why the band didn't even try, rather throwing something else at our faces completely. Something more progressive, ambitious, introspective, despondent, obscure, indulgent and energetic in that tired kind of way, all of which guaranteed*

*that the radio would shit itself, fans would feel cheated, and the product would last well beyond its years. What a relief it was that us snobs could like MGMT again! Woohoo!*

***“This is a wilful and lovably eccentric second album from a band who’ve had a sniff of being pop stars and decided they’d much rather be weird and esoteric, thanks all the same.”***

**— Uncut**



**71**

**ICEAGE  
BEYONDLESS**

## End of Year Lists

#6 No Ripcord | #6 Northern Transmissions | #8 Flavorwire | #9  
Earbuddy | #11 Treble | #12 Crack Magazine | #21 Noisey | #24  
Paste | #27 The 405 | #30 Stereogum | #33 BLARE | #37 The  
Skinny | #40 Pitchfork | #4 Juice Nothing

**4 May 2018**

**Post-Art Punk**

**Produced by Nis Bysted**

**Label: Matador**

**40:54**

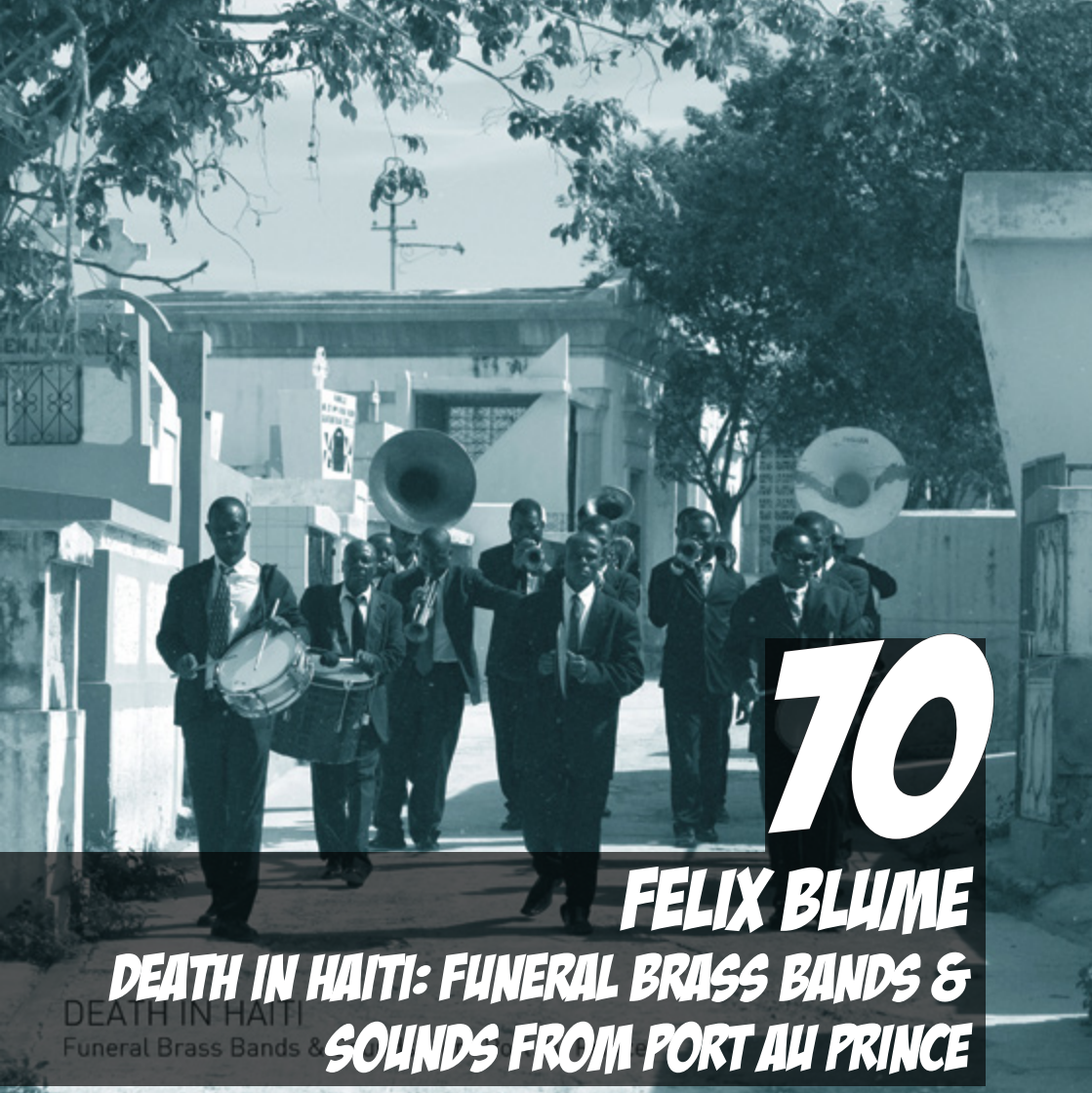
This record (like each of Iceage's previous three records) is a determined stride in a very measurable direction. The lawless cowboy attitude still staunchly wafts through these streets, but the bluesy drunkard strut has been emphasised, underlined in red, more "punk" in spirit rather than "punk" in genre, preferring jangling guitars and jazzy mockery than their former trademark filth. But make no mistake, it takes much bigger balls to produce an album so commercially viable in comparison to their harsher roots, and what's more, their dismissive

despondence is at an all-time high, undoubtedly crafting several of their greatest songs here without even hinting at any pride about it. Surely, one day, the books will speak of this band as one of the greatest we had. I'd put money on it, all in.

***"They're a band who refuse to stop moving and exploring their sound, emerging every time with a more refined approach to the music. That they can achieve this with integrity should be celebrated, except maybe this time with a bottle of red wine instead of cheap beer."***

**— AllMusic**





**70**

**FELIX BLUME**

**DEATH IN HAITI: FUNERAL BRASS BANDS & SOUNDS FROM PORT AU PRINCE**

DEATH IN HAITI  
Funeral Brass Bands &

**End of Year Lists**

*#12 Juice Nothing*

**26 January 2018**

**French Caribbean Brass Band Jazz Music Field Recordings**

**Produced by Félix Blume**

**Label: Discrepant**

**40:42**

*Field recordings are, by very definition, the practice of stealing an atmosphere then slapping your name upon it, easiest job in the world, done. But even in the most criminal of cases, nothing is as dishonourable as what Blume has done here. The concept was simple enough: to capture the strange juxtaposition of Haiti funeral ceremonies, where the optimism of a happy brass band attempts to lift away the wails of pure grief, momentarily drowning out the mourning pain of loss beneath a bouncy little melody. Which feels exactly how one would*

*imagine, as if you're eavesdropping on a personal moment that you have no right on hearing and, in doing so, are shamelessly exploiting the trauma of others for "entertainment". Herein lies a definite moral dilemma. But while the relatively sick execution required no intellect nor talent on Félix Blume's part, it's still an insanely powerful idea which couldn't possibly be more captivating or agonising to listen to, and in that way (and in that way only), it's the greatest album I've ever heard in my life.*

**"Death in Haiti is the most intriguing and affecting field recording project I've heard in some time."**

**— The Needledrop**



SACRED BONES  
RECORDS

SBR-117

# Pharmakon

an LP recorded in 2014

## *Bestial Burden*

SIDE A: Vacuum; Intestine of Instinct; Body Betrays Itself  
SIDE B: Primitive Struggle; Autoimmune; Bestial Burden

# 69

## **PHARMAKON BESTIAL BURDEN**

### End of Year Lists

#13 Crack Magazine | #22 Tiny Mix Tapes | #26 Consequence of  
Sound | #26 The 405 | #28 Pitchfork | #28 The Quietus | #49 The  
Wire | #18 Juice Nothing

**14 October 2014**  
**Death Industrial**  
**Produced by Sean Ragon**  
**Label: Sacred Bones**  
**29:01**

An internal cyst grew so large within Pharmakon's torso that the surrounding insides began to fail and an undisclosed organ had to be removed. By her own account, it was initially a torturous struggle which nearly killed her but then went on to be the key of inspiration behind *Bestial Burden*, a "desire to show the body as a lump of flesh and cells that mutate and fail you and betray you; this very banal, unimportant, grotesque aspect of ourselves". It is no surprise then, that this album is more destructive, terrifying, and disturbing than almost anything else

on the market, utilising possessed screams over percussion-heavy agony which challenges the very definition of music, impossible to "enjoy" but that's kinda the point.

***"Bestial Burden works because of its methodical execution--a calculated piece of catharsis that towers over all other bedroom power electronics tape-peddlers."***

**— Magnet**



**68**

**LOW  
DOUBLE NEGATIVE**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Drowned in Sound | #1 musicOMH | #1 Uncut | #2 BrooklynVegan  
#2 Gaffa (Sweden) | #2 OOR | #2 Vulture | #3 Fopp | #3 God Is In  
The TV | #3 Loud and Quiet | #3 Spectrum Culture | #4 Gigwise | #4  
Under the Radar | #5 BBC Radio 6 Music | #5 Juice Nothing

**14 September 2018**  
**Ambient Glitch Noise Pop**  
**Produced by B. J. Burton**  
**Label: Sub Pop**  
**48:50**

With a 25-year career to their name, Low have long since earned their slowcore royalty status, and that is what makes *Double Negative* all the more extraordinary, somehow leaping forward as their most exciting and daring venture yet (which is huge, considering they have 11 other albums). Their signature drawn-out softness may be as unhurried as ever, but this time it has been run through a defective machine, fiddled by problematic textures of digital static until it malfunctions, scrambling to decode its own messages as the trademark

Low beauty desperately struggles to shine through any distorted fracture it can find. It's a masterpiece within the glitch-pop genre itself and as proficient at reprogramming your brain as it is at gradually forcing sad tar throughout your pulmonary artery.

***“Not since Bon Iver’s aforementioned reinvention or even Radiohead’s *Kid A* have a relatively mainstream band made such an assured volte-face, wilfully pushing their audience away while they revisit, remake and remodel the tension that made them so very precious in the first place.”***

**— Record Collector**



**67**

**PRIESTS**  
**NOTHING FEELS NATURAL**

## End of Year Lists

*#3 Stereogum | #6 The A.V. Club | #8 The Atlantic | #10 Newsweek  
#16 Esquire (US) | #18 SPIN | #20 Treble | #21 Paste | #25  
Billboard | #25 Pitchfork | #27 Crack Magazine | #27 Loud and  
Quiet | #27 The Wild Honey Pie | #8 Juice Nothing*

**27 January 2017**

**Post-Punk**

**Produced by Kevin Erickson**

**Label: Sister Polygon**

**33:33**

One unavoidable decade fact is that the post-punk resurgence scene was more than adequately drenched, resulting in such an abundance of the genre everywhere that any band brave enough to tackle this soggy corner were immediately faced with an army of much competition, while the excess of choice left many listeners fatigued, losing interest by the day. Fortunately, *Priests'* bold debut proved that there was space at the top still, by humorously sidestepping the usual miserable clichés of the sound with a demented self-assurance, simplistic hostility,

and an arrogant smirk which indicated that they kinda knew they had an essential record on their hands. And in doing so, they played their part in patching the boat that looked less and less likely to sink each year that passed, for better or worse (read: for better!!).

***“The album sincerely embraces every dark corner of the brain, not just the ones that are easiest to sum up. *Nothing Feels Natural* is daring, sincere, and intimate, somehow more universal in its particularity.”***

**— *Consequence of Sound***





**66**

***ROLY PORTER***  
***THIRD LAW***

## End of Year Lists

*#38 The Vinyl Factory | #67 The Quietus | #8 Juice Nothing*

**22 January 2016**

**Dark Ambient**

**Produced by Roly Porter**

**Label: Tri Angle**

**52:08**

*Third Law is terrifying. With some encouragement from the impeccably apt artwork, one can't help but get visions of a lonely being, lost in the superdarkness of space, suffocating amidst the intense density of nothing, not only acutely aware that everything is about to die, but that even this is all part of something greater, a full story never disclosed, the true mystery never solved which makes the asphyxiation all the more scarier. Said fears are openly encouraged by the abstract noises which drone out in no particular order, decorated by minute details*

*expertly manoeuvring the pacing, then colliding face-first into colossal disaster-vibrations from worlds falling apart, erupting the whole Universe in cold goosebumps for 52 minutes straight.*

***“Just as deep and cosmic in scope as its predecessor, this album eschews traditional beats in favour of a primordial throb, a rhythm that seems to originate deep within the planet’s core.”***

**— Exclaim!**



**65**

**BENJAMIN CLEMENTINE**  
***I TELL A FLY***

## End of Year Lists

*#49 Sputnikmusic | #74 Les Inrocks | #2 Juice Nothing*

**29 September 2017**  
**Progressive Art Pop**  
**Produced by Benjamin Clementine**  
**Label: Behind | Virgin EMI**  
**45:00**

After Benjamin's debut shone a bright spotlight onto a man holding a Mercury Music Prize, many figured such a concentrated form of attention would hinder a valuable follow-up (as such accolades so often do). But no! Instead, it would appear that Clementine was actually holding back on us all along. His first album was a calculated step towards accessibility, and now armed with the exact acclaim he sought, he utilised the platform for a louder voice, calling out, "Now look what I can do!". And what he can do, is elegantly balance the delicate

intricacies of graciously composed piano whirls with a natural aptness for surreal lunacy, fearlessly setting his soaring voice free, fueled by enough creativity that it's audibly spilling all over the place. And he does so with a smile. Our opinions didn't even cross his mind.

***"Just like all the very best albums, I Tell A Fly is by turns thought provoking, musically challenging and genre defying but perhaps more importantly, it imbues a sense of uniqueness that suggests you can't imagine anyone else making it."***

**— Clash Music**

GOLDEN HOUR  
KACEY MUSGRAVES

64

**KACEY MUSGRAVES**  
**GOLDEN HOUR**

## End of Year Lists

#1 American Songwriter | #1 Entertainment Weekly | #1 People  
#1 Sputnikmusic | #1 Stereogum | #1 Thrillist | #1 Us Weekly | #2  
Albumism | #2 Associated Press | #2 Digital Trends | #2 Flavorwire  
#2 Noisy | #2 Pitchfork | #2 PopMatters | #3 Juice Nothing

**30 March 2018**

**Country Pop**

**Produced by Daniel Tashian & Ian Fitchuk**

**Label: MCA Nashville**

**45:44**

Recently married, *Golden Hour* is Musgraves' love record, casually inviting you into her dreamy world of fluffy optimism and genuine sweetness, floating about on a heart-shaped cloud while performing each song with a happy face of fulfilment. Such a heartfelt affection may lend itself closer to the pop fashion rather than any country grit but said progression expands her pallet so easily that it feels like the most logical step forward for the artist, gently filling in the spaces using her lush greenery without uprooting all of her source soil just yet. And,

thankfully, Kacey's primary strength remains as her instinctive ability to nurture her songs until each one is fully developed and standing up on their own two feet. It's a gorgeous thing to witness.

***"It's a waste of time to recount highlights though, because this whole album is essential, and to skip from one point to the next without experiencing the journey along the way is sort of the opposite of how *Golden Hour* deserves to be listened to."***

**— Sputnikmusic**



## End of Year Lists

#7 Dork | #50 Q Magazine | #61 Rough Trade | #4 Juice Nothing

**19 May 2017**  
**Indie Art Rock**  
**Produced by Dan Carey**  
**Label: Fiction Records**  
**54:50**

*For such a basic title, **The Witch** could not have been better named. It sounds like a wicked deal was struck up somewhere, a pact which promised an undercurrent of haunting sorcery, holding an array of distinct genres afloat, steadily balancing a dreamy spaciness with post-punk artiness now conjured by a band who were already dedicated veterans to the dark arts... except this is somehow only Pumarosa's debut album. To be so self-assured with the quality to match it is essentially an unheard of phenomenon, and once this devilry touches enough people, we shall all*

*one day reflect upon this record as an authentic classic from our decade. I am in utter disbelief that this hasn't already happened.*

***“Here is an album that embraces every fibre of your being; generous in its awe-inspiring and beautiful moments. It'll keep you guessing every minute of its hour long run. It's uniquely Pumarosa and there's nothing else quite like it.”***

**— The Line of Best Fit**





**62**

**SOPHIE**

**OIL OF EVERY PEARL'S UN-INSIDES**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Crack Magazine | #1 DJ Mag | #1 Tiny Mix Tapes | #2  
Highsnobiety | #2 The 405 | #2 The Vinyl Factory | #3 Bleep | #3  
Dazed | #3 Earbuddy | #3 The Line of Best Fit | #5 Drowned in Sound  
#5 No Ripcord | #5 PAPER | #6 musicOMH | #13 Juice Nothing

**15 June 2018**

**Deconstructed Club Bubblegum Bass**

**Produced by Sophie**

**Label: MSMSMSM | Future Classic | Transgressive**

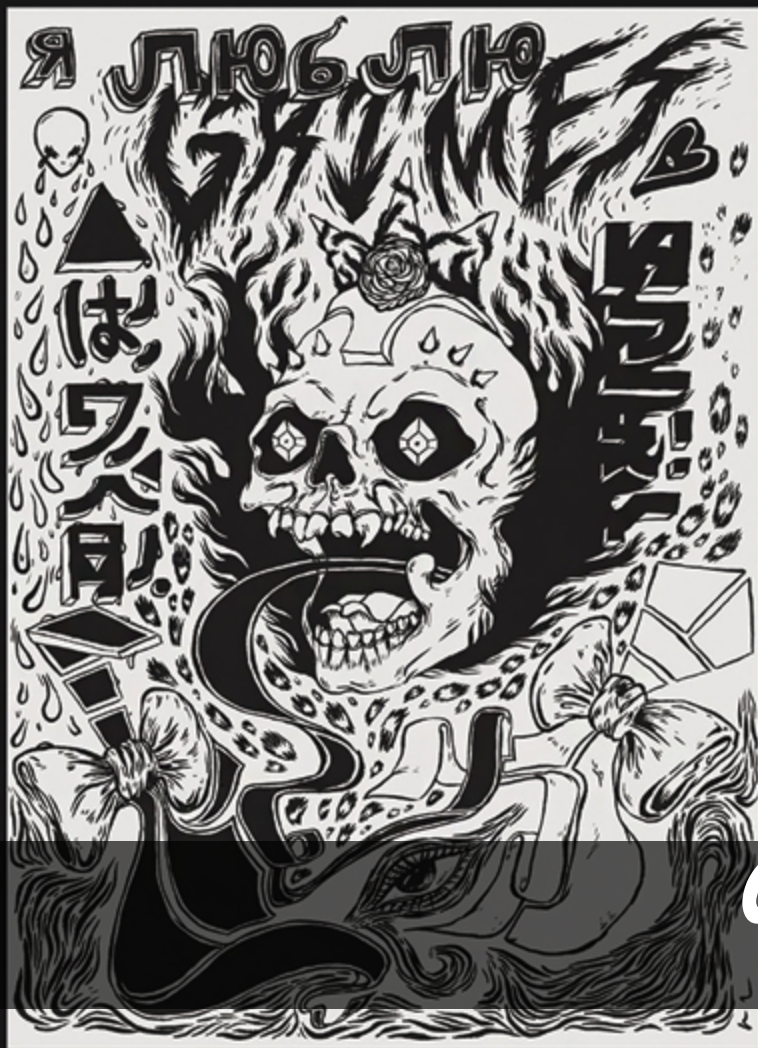
**39:55**

*If this isn't the music of the future, then it is the music of this exact point in time right here, right now. Meet Sophie, and just like the elegant androgynous alienesque imagery on the cover would suggest, these sounds might be a little overwhelming for some of you, as they squash your brain between tender strokes of ambient love and dancey turbulences of industrial abrasions. It's a different sort of pop music. Difficult pop. Extreme pop. Like pop died and Sophie killed it by pushing the poor genre too far forward and then sideways until it*

*glitched and made a noise and then fell to pieces. Don't worry about it, it's fine, just slap on some nail polish and turn it off and on again, it'll run. And as every musical publication vibrated giddily in its presence, my faith in critical opinion was singlehandedly restored by this record alone.*

***“This is the kind of music that, in 20 years, we may look back on as a pivotal point in changing the trajectory of the pop music sound.”***

***— Exclaim!***



Grimes  
НО Я ПРЕДУПРЕЖДАЮ ВАС,  
ЧТО Я ЖИВУ В ПОСЛЕДНИЙ РАЗ

*Visions*

# 61

ВЫПУСК: ГОЛОВА

## GRIMES VISIONS

ПЕРВЫЙ ПЕРИОДИК, В КОТОРОМ  
Я ОТВЕТИЛ: "МНЕ ИХ НЕ ДАЮТ"  
И Я ТОЖЕ, УМРУ С ТОБОЙ...

### End of Year Lists

#1 AllMusic | #1 Gorilla vs. Bear | #1 Rough Trade | #2  
Cokemachineglow | #2 DIY | #2 NME | #2 The Fly | #2 The Guardian  
#3 FILTER | #5 Clash | #5 Exclaim! | #6 Pitchfork | #7 Urban  
Outfitters | #8 Pretty Much Amazing | #2 Juice Nothing

**21 February 2012**  
**Electro Synthpop**  
**Produced by Grimes**  
**Label: 4AD**  
**48:04**

Whether you feel this sensual album is a quirky hallucination or a spooky acid trip, everyone would have to agree that it happened while you weren't here, the entire experience forming into a purple orb then floating down your throat, sliding deep into a place within your stomach that you didn't know existed before. It's nervewracking but just go with it. What choice do you have? For *Visions* was at the pinnacle of what's hotter than hot circa 2012, a freshly distinct yet distant girly sound which is subtle rather than overly mental, yet still pretty mental. What

a decade-superstar she turned out to be, eh? Did I mention she recorded the whole thing in her apartment?

***“On her 4AD debut, *Visions*, she continues her march toward accessibility, rendering hazy, quixotic sketches into tangible, hook-heavy electro-pop.”***

**— The A.V. Club**

60

JOANNA NEWSOM  
DIVERS

### End of Year Lists

#3 Time Out New York | #4 musicOMH | #5 Cosmopolitan | #5 The Daily Beast | #6 Magnet | #6 Mashable | #7 Drowned in Sound | #8 No Ripcord | #9 FLOOD | #10 The Guardian | #12 Clash | #13 Pitchfork | #13 Q Magazine | #3 Juice Nothing

**23 October 2015**

**Chamber Folk**

**Produced by Noah Georgeson**

**Label: Drag City**

**51:52**

After the indulgent obesity that was 2010's (unfathomably critically acclaimed yet omitted from this list) *Have One On Me*, Joanna tightened up the spaces, streamlined the nudges, layered on the instrumentation, and put forward the most immediately accessible record of her career. But even when considering this easier-to-swallow festival of shimmering oddness, the bewitching magic from our mythical Newsom allures us as mischievously as always, bringing foresty visions of dainty fairies who skim their bare feet over the music whilst oversized legendary creatures

own the world with merriment, unaware of anything but themselves. It's an unconventional charm that the eccentric mouth and delicate fingers of Joanna Newsom achieve within a breeze, and even if the title is perhaps overdue, I believe this was the point where she inarguably glued herself as one of the greatest songwriters of our time.

***“Divers is another meticulous masterpiece from one of the songwriters of her time, an album that’ll still be spellbinding generations from now.”***

**— Record Collector**

*Jessica Lea Mayfield Tell Me*



**59**

**JESSICA LEA MAYFIELD**  
**TELL ME**

**End of Year Lists**

*#5 Juice Nothing*

**8 February 2011**  
**Indie Pop Alt Country**  
**Produced by Dan Auerbach**  
**Label: Nonesuch**  
**37:40**

Over the entire 10 year period, it's a challenge for me to think of an album more overlooked than this one. The only possible explanation for this crime against the 2010s is that people have carelessly lumped the product into a box labelled either "undeveloped pop" or "typical alt-country" and then stacked it up on the shelf, dust and forgotten without ever exploring just how deep these roots of sadness go. Because they go well deep, burrowing into long-lost crevices of intelligence without any fear against those relatable demons of introspection. But not

in some healthy therapeutic type of way, but rather where our Jessica protagonist is a broken soul, giving up all hope until those aforementioned roots wither away into nothing but apathetic melancholy. But the tree that grew out skew as a result? They are really moving.

***"Tell Me feels genuine and unpretentious throughout, setting the tone for a night of cathartic, misty-eyed introspection."***

**— Paste Magazine**



**KIWANUKA**



**58**

**MICHAEL KIWANUKA**  
**KIWANUKA**

## End of Year Lists

#3 BBC Radio 6 Music | #6 Albumism | #21 MOJO | #30 Rough Trade | #31 Uncut | #70 Piccadilly Records | #5 Juice Nothing

**1 November 2019**  
**Psychedelic Soul**  
**Produced by Danger Mouse**  
**Label: Polydor | Interscope**  
**51:13**

On his third album, Michael Kiwanuka demonstrates how it isn't always advisable to force progression. Instead, by persistently rubbing the same spot over and over, one can sharpen their vision until... well, something like this happens. It's a assemblage of brains and vitality, an unexpected gift where Danger Mouse's polished mouse ears and Kiwanuka's upliftingly explosive vocals amalgamate into a bowl of hot soup for the spirit, each spoonful maintaining an impossibly high standard of passionate hooks, ensuring that, even by the second

serving, you're already recognising the entire record like an old friend saying hello. If this isn't an instant soul classic, then such a record simply does not exist. It shatters the genre as far as the decade can see.

**“Ultimately, this is an album in which a troubled spirit seeks the relief of music to mesmerising and charged effect. And that is timeless.”**

**— The Telegraph**



57

**SLEIGH BELLS  
TREATS**

## End of Year Lists

*#3 DIY | #4 Prefix | #4 Pretty Much Amazing | #4 Slant | #6  
Entertainment Weekly | #6 Paste | #6 Stereogum | #7 Complex  
#11 Consequence of Sound | #11 PopMatters | #12 One Thirty BPM  
#14 Under the Radar | #16 Pitchfork | #3 Juice Nothing*

**11 May 2010**

**Noise Pop**

**Produced by Derek Miller**

**Label: Mom + Pop | N.E.E.T.**

**32:06**

Despite the cover work that semi-accurately represents the tainted High School scent that this album gives off, I would never recommend listening to it at school or at work or with a hangover or any other such position of vulnerability. On paper, it's a formula that should get irritating rather quickly: abrasively hammering (and I mean, HAMMERING) noise music in conjunction with a pop voice so sickly-sweet that it could belong to that of a pubescent girl... but I guess that is exactly what would happen when a teen-pop star joins forces with the former guitarist from

Poison The Well. Whatever, the result is still remarkably unpredictable while working far better than it should, as one exceptionally fun, compulsively addictive record which is so fresh you can taste it. It's not often that you say something like this with such sincerity, but *Treats* is genuinely an art piece unlike anything ever.

***“Even though it’s as ambitious an exercise in freeform genre-splicing and pure, amp-blowing volume as has been attempted in the past few years, it’s always at least as fun as it is smart, taking the three great pillars of guilty-pleasure music [...] and rolling them together into a singularly appealing cacophony.”***

**— Slant Magazine**



**56**

**WARDRUNA**  
**RUNALJOD - YGGDRASIL**

**End of Year Lists**

*#6 Juice Nothing*

**15 March 2013**  
**Nordic Dark Folk**  
**Produced by Kvitrafn**  
**Label: Indie Recordings**  
**66:14**

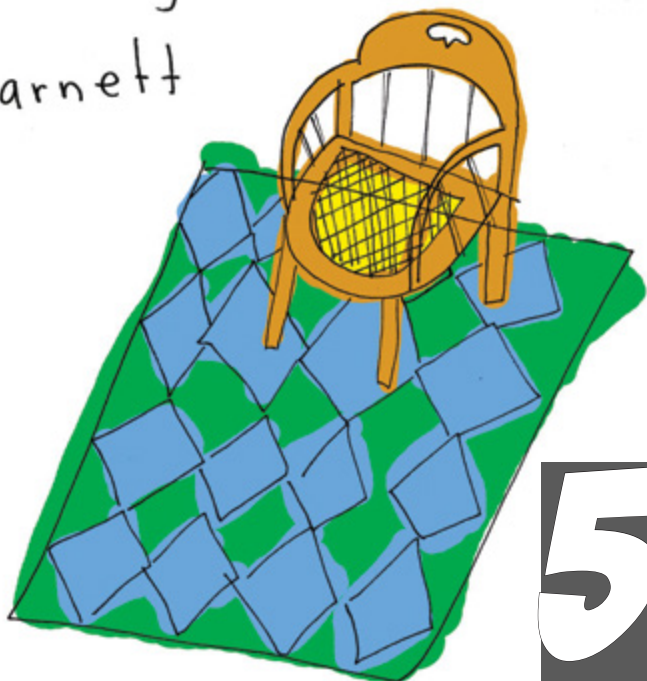
Based on Nordic spiritualism and the Elder Futhark runes, here's a big fat batch of ayawaska for your trip, you're gonna need it. Because once the unrecognisable tribal instruments chant their ritual into your ears, you are no longer here; you are outside, surrounded by the ceremonial dance of some undiscovered society where the hypnotic connection to Mother Earth is both uplifting and intimidating, everything bonding together in strength, preparing itself for the unavoidable forest war foretold by the elders. Even at its fearless length, its secret technique

is to steadily feed you all of the wild-grown fruit that you need in order to never grow tired again, marching on a journey that will change you forever. Wait, what's going on?

***“Wardruna has captured the imagery to unearth wisdom and spirituality. Under the skies of Odin, as the firelight silhouettes your body against the mountains of Norway, listening to the gentle rhythm of ‘Yggdrasil’, you can almost feel the flicker of the flames on your cheek.”***

**— Sputnikmusic**

courtney  
barnett



55

**COURTNEY BARNETT,**  
**SOMETIMES I SIT AND THINK, AND**  
**SOMETIMES I JUST SIT**

### End of Year Lists

#2 FasterLouder | #2 Newsweek | #2 PopMatters | #2 Reverb | #2  
Slant Magazine | #2 SPIN | #3 No Ripcord | #3 Paste | #3 Rough  
Trade | #3 Time Out London | #4 American Songwriter | #4 Magnet  
#4 Piccadilly Records | #11 Juice Nothing

**24 March 2015**

**Alternative Indie Rock**

**Produced by Burke Reid**

**Label: Marathon Artists | Mom + Pop Music**

**43:29**

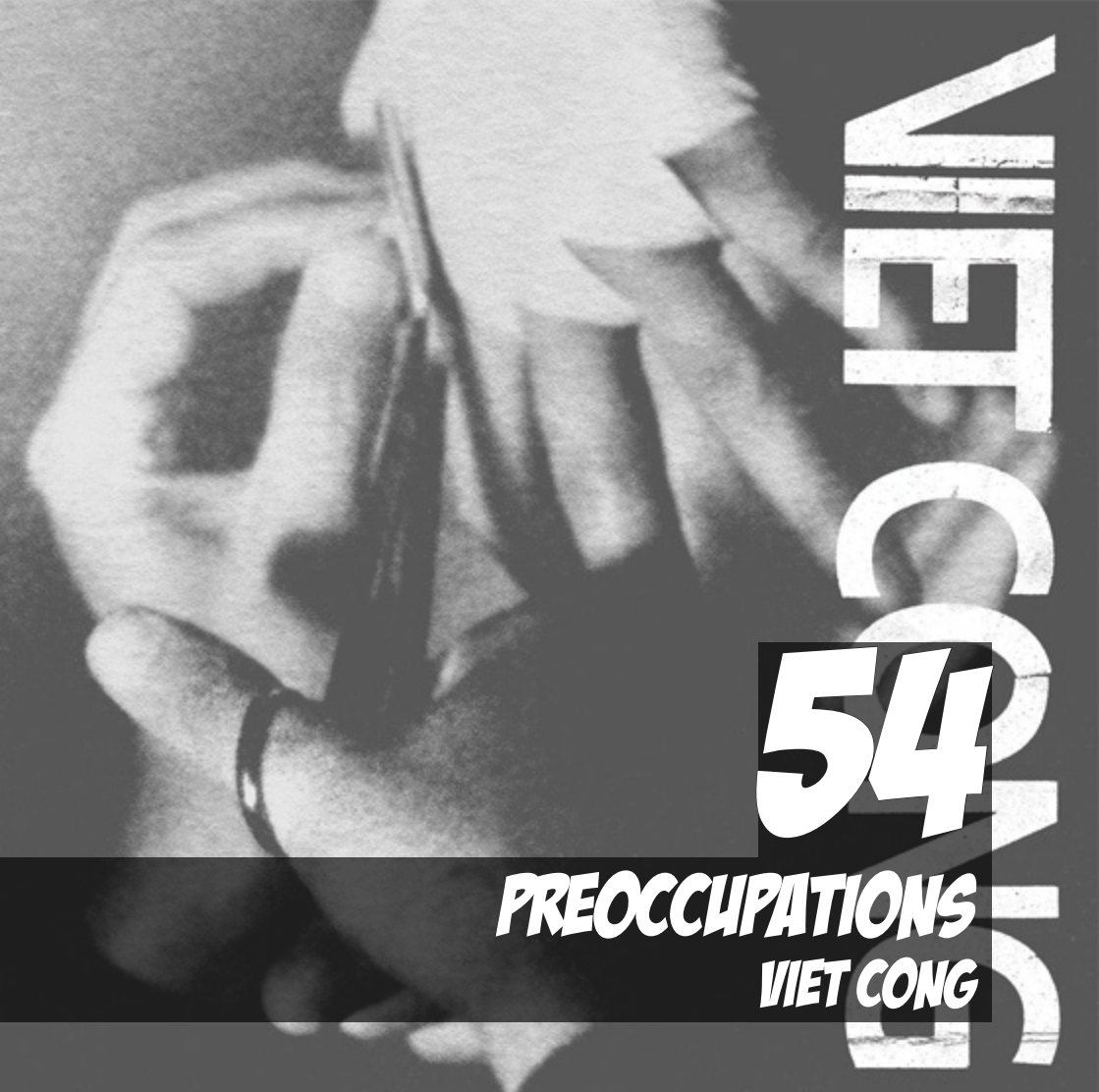
Some people exist in one lifelong crisis, the most ordinary of everyday circumstances amplifying in their head, turning profound and over-stimulating their thoughts, convincing the brain that it goes deeper than it really does. The disinterested intelligence spins overtime to produce hilarious short stories which are as honest as they are sharp in the mind, but by the time they have articulated into words, they come out dull and blank, lethargic and apathetic. Thankfully, in Courtney's case, her indifference is enthusiastically propped up by the

biting guitar work, which explodes all around her with an aggressively live foundation and raw emotion, except she doesn't even seem to notice. Courtney Barnett is too busy thinking.

***“Gentle, subtle, poignant, Barnett is almost crooning as she talks disappointment and expectation, and she has a photographer’s eye for detail when it comes to the otherwise mundane.”***

**— The Guardian**





## **PREOCCUPATIONS VIET CONG**

### **End of Year Lists**

*#5 Sputnikmusic | #6 Norman Records | #11 Drowned in Sound  
#14 No Ripcord | #14 Slant Magazine | #19 PopMatters | #19 Pretty  
Much Amazing | #19 The Skinny | #21 Treble | #23 FLOOD | #27  
FasterLouder | #27 Loud and Quiet | #36 Gigwise | #7 Juice Nothing*

**20 January 2015**

**Post-Punk**

**Produced by Graham Walsh**

**Label: Flemish Eye | Jagjaguwar**

**37:04**

As I think I may have already mentioned a billion times, the surge of 2010s post-punk was a welcomed dirty revolution, but no acts stabbed at the icy peak in quite the same way that *Preoccupations* did, a band who shamelessly stole from the past masters then dished out the tried-and-tested raw formula in one very exciting and unusually sideways submission. Its impact is fast as it distorts across your dry mind in less than 40 muddy minutes, driving hard with repetitive percussion, catchy riffage, and clean droning vocals—a homage to harassment

which does well to challenge the boundaries without losing the fun of a gripping hook or ignoring the craft of writing sharp songs. It already feels reasonable to suggest that this is a landmark of the modern genre.

**“It’s these frenzied, sharp-turn transitions are what make this band feel so vital, so alive and so different.”**

**— Exclaim!**



**53**

**KATE TEMPEST  
LET THEM EAT CHAOS**

**LET THEM EAT CHAOS**

## End of Year Lists

#3 musicOMH | #4 Loud and Quiet | #9 Gaffa (Norway) | #14  
Drowned in Sound | #16 Double J | #25 Rough Trade | #29 NME  
#31 Q Magazine | #41 BrooklynVegan | #61 PopMatters | #92 Fopp  
Esquire (UK) | #11 Juice Nothing

**7 October 2016**  
**UK Political Conscious Hip Hop**  
**Produced by Dan Carey**  
**Label: Fiction | Lex**  
**47:43**

*Alright, so here you go. Take this and don't drop it. It's the upset soundtrack of the right now, forcing you to fix eye-contact with the political state of the world, demanding you surrender your attention, shoving your opinions full of information, then leaving you alone with your own thoughts, tormented by all of the emotional disgust that this bleak aspect of the world deserves. The spoken word poetics unify themes of meaningful tales, challenging your optimism, dragging you through the darkest alleyways of London's most depressing of problems, a visual trip*

*that is about as conscious as you can get from a voice that feels almost too authentic to bear. Kate Tempest. The most aware and articulate talent in the music industry right now, flaunting three consecutively relevant records from this decade, all of which are in this book, more pages than any other artist can boast.*

***“Perhaps Tempest’s greatest achievement is not to fall prey to the pressure for unnecessary revolution; her work sits more comfortably in the tradition of perfecting the groove, not changing it. That perfection might be illusion, but its pursuit can produce wonderful work, as it has right here.”***

**— The Observer**

**ART  
ANGELS**

**No.4**

2009



**1000,  
0000**

**52**

**GRIMES  
ART ANGELS**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Gorilla vs. Bear | #1 Idolator | #1 NME | #1 Pigeons & Planes | #1 Stereogum | #2 Cosmopolitan | #2 Dazed | #3 Billboard | #3 Clash | #3 Consequence of Sound | #3 Diffuser | #3 Mashable | #3 Pitchfork | #3 Pretty Much Amazing | #3 Slant Magazine | #14 Juice Nothing

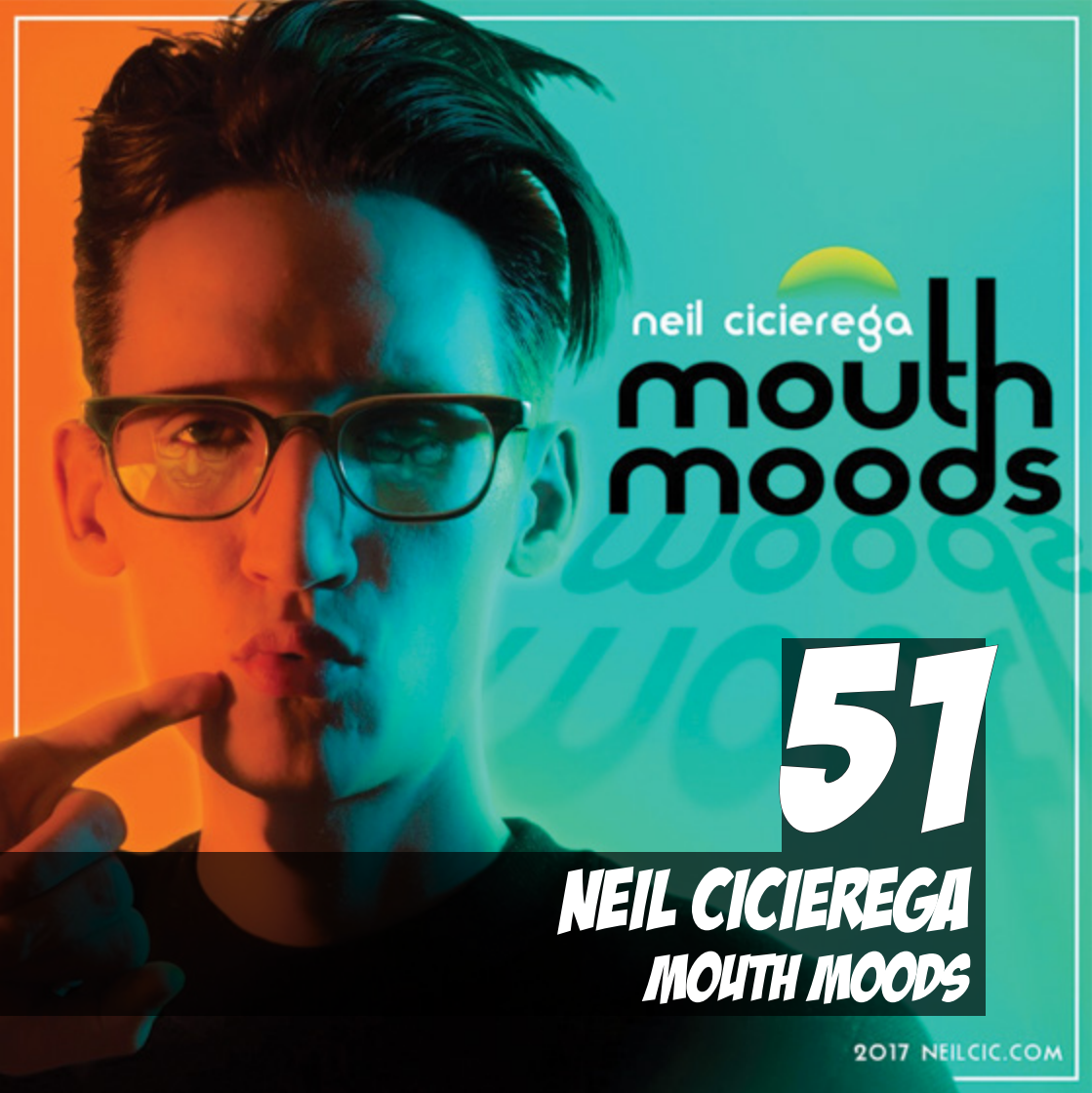
**6 November 2015**  
**Electro Synthpop**  
**Produced by Grimes**  
**Label: 4AD**  
**49:37**

After the intense touring schedule of 2012's drug-fueled *Visions*, Claire Boucher had a breakdown. Her hair was falling out and she became disillusioned by the industry, flirting with the idea that killing the Grimes name was the only solution for some peace of mind. Thankfully, our heroine pixie realised that she had a mission to do and simply required a higher platform to achieve this from: pop music! And her effortless commercial transition was indisputably a monumental success, sounding clearer, healthier, and more focused than she ever has, without

any hints of compromising nor selling-out her unorthodox charisma during the delicate process. Because it's a corrupt form of pop, as addictive and destructive as processed glucose, and one ferociously danceable testament to Grimes' ability both in front of the mic and behind the mixing desk. She easily became one of the decade's most spoken names because of this record, and maybe also because she was having the sex with Elon Musk.

**“Grimes has given us a complete record that’s everything pop should be in 2015: utterly uncompromising, imaginative and, somehow, universally accessible.”**

**— Exclaim!**



neil cicierega  
**mouth  
moods**

**51**

**NEIL CICIEREGA  
MOUTH MOODS**

2017 NEILCIC.COM

## End of Year Lists

*#6 The Needle Drop | #6 Juice Nothing*

**23 January 2017**

**Pop Mashup**

**Produced by Neil Cicierega**

**Label: n/a**

**56:53**

Neil Cicierega's curriculum vitae parades many sections, one of which includes "pop enthusiast" armed with so much useless knowledge that when he crafts a copyright infringement nightmare mashup mixtape, it zaps fresh life into forgotten classics and smashes the mouths of one-hit wonders until they are frequently more impressive than their original forefathers, and (even more effective) without ever giving in to the temptation of obscure hipster flexing. You may never know what is coming, but you will always recognise what ultimately

comes, every piece standing as such a massive Top 40 hit that this entire collection will satisfy even the most ignorant of listeners. Go ahead and jump around your room, full of laughs and nostalgic dances, appreciating this as the greatest mashup album ever made (results may vary).

**"Mouth Moods is Neil Cicierega's most masterful mashup of meme music yet."**

**— The Needle Drop**





## End of Year Lists

#1 Gorilla vs. Bear | #1 Variety | #2 Northern Transmissions | #2 Passion of the Weiss | #3 Complex | #3 FLOOD | #4 BrooklynVegan | #4 KCRW | #4 MOJO | #4 Nerdist | #4 Paste | #4 Q Magazine | #4 Slant Magazine | #4 SPIN | #4 Stereogum | #5 Juice Nothing

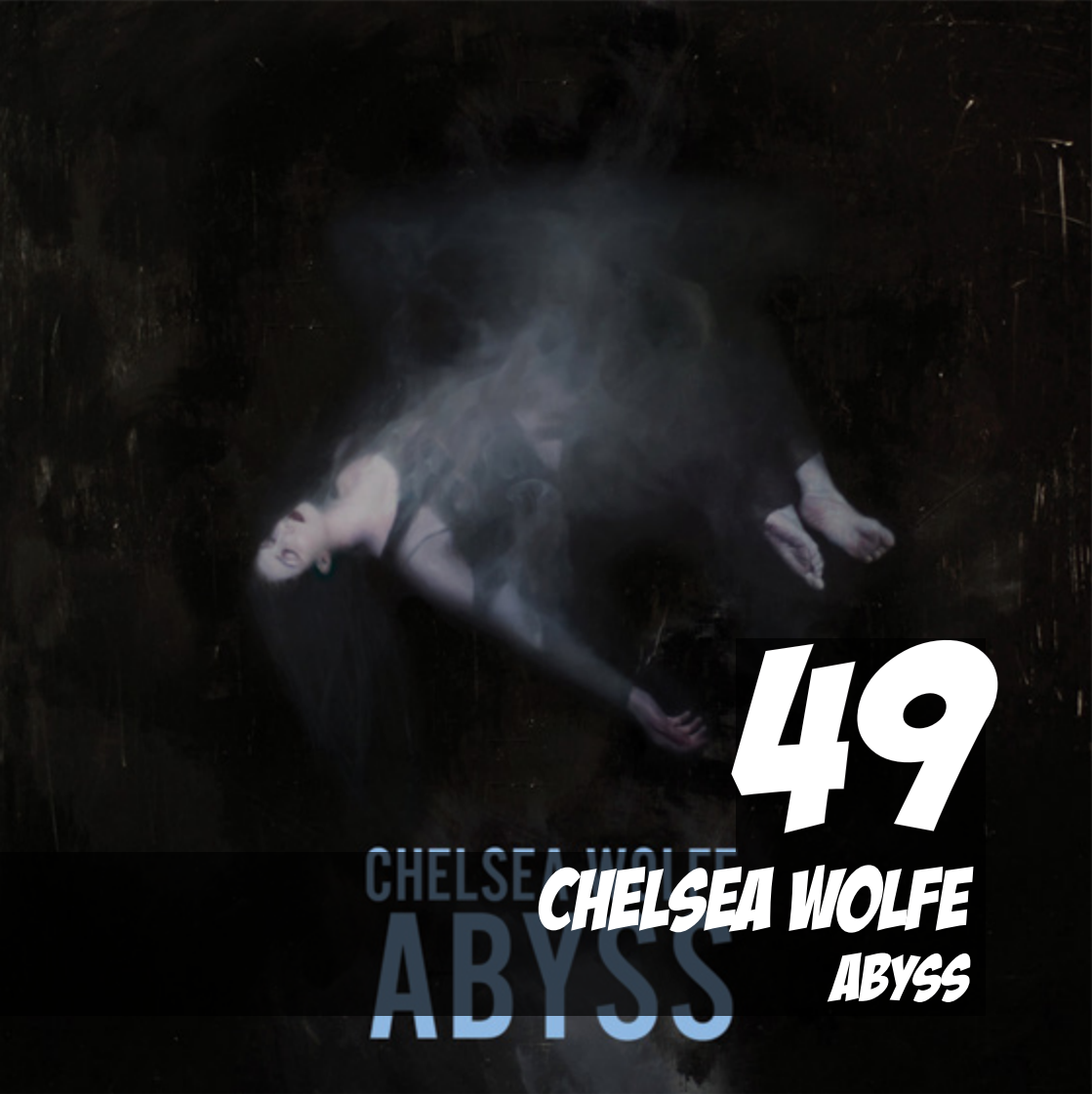
**11 November 2016**  
**Conscious East Coast Jazz Rap**  
**Produced by A Tribe Called Quest**  
**Label: Epic**  
**60:20**

The circumstances surrounding this album should have slammed everything directly into nothing but a fat disaster. It was the outfit's first release since 1998 (which could have been misconstrued as the typical cash-in reunion) but above this was the recent tragic passing of founding member Phife Dawg (which, once again, could have been called out as yet another posthumous financial exploitation). But, by some miracle, none of these hypothetical concerns buzzed true. Rather we were blessed with another record of Tribe doing what

Tribe do without trying to be what Tribe are. The urban playfulness, silly samples, abrupt changes, and natural chemistry between the members (as well as the flows between old and new school vibes) was not some stab at modernising anything, instead, a relevant component attached their career as if they never broke up, and in that way, it's as timeless as they always are and as unfathomably brilliant as they always were. And thank goodness for that!

***“This is no nostalgia trip or callous comeback. It’s a giant exclamation point on the end of a brilliant career. It’s also a tribute to the everyman genius of Phife, a widescreen look at the record-making skills of Q-Tip, and most importantly, it’s a pure, undiluted, joyous thrill to have the Tribe back.”***

**— AllMusic**



**49**

CHELSEA WOLFE  
**ABYSS**

**CHELSEA WOLFE**  
**ABYSS**

## End of Year Lists

#12 Treble | #21 The Needle Drop | #42 No Ripcord | #53  
PopMatters | #94 Under the Radar | #83 Juice Nothing

**7 August 2015**  
**Gothic Darkwave Rock**  
**Produced by John Congleton**  
**Label: Sargent House**  
**55:17**

Sometimes you hear a band who screams about devil worship, and you almost automatically accept it as the music that Lucifer would listen to. But then you hear something like Chelsea Wolfe and you realise that this is the actual music that Satan would listen to. Because Abyss is not the unholy-for-shock type of evil, but rather the sincerest form of witchy doom which sedates you before conjuring up the darkest of spirits to grieve by your bedside. And as she cautiously edges towards an almost more commercially accepted approach per every release, Chelsea

only seems to heighten her ethereal enigma, releasing her chilling vocals into the atmosphere as they reserve their mournful moods, riding the distorted drone of the music to take a piece of blessed chalk and sketch the outline of your soul for its studies. It's kinda terrifying.

***“Ultimately, Abyss is like a nightmare. It consumes you, shows you a darkness you’d tried to keep away from, but in the cold of night, wide awake and heart-pumping you can’t deny you enjoy the thrill of it.”***

**— The 405**



## End of Year Lists

*#6 FasterLouder | #25 Sputnikmusic | #42 The Needle Drop | #3  
Juice Nothing*

**1 March 2013**

**Punk Blues**

**Produced by Gareth Liddiard, Burke Reid & John Roberto**

**Label: Self-released**

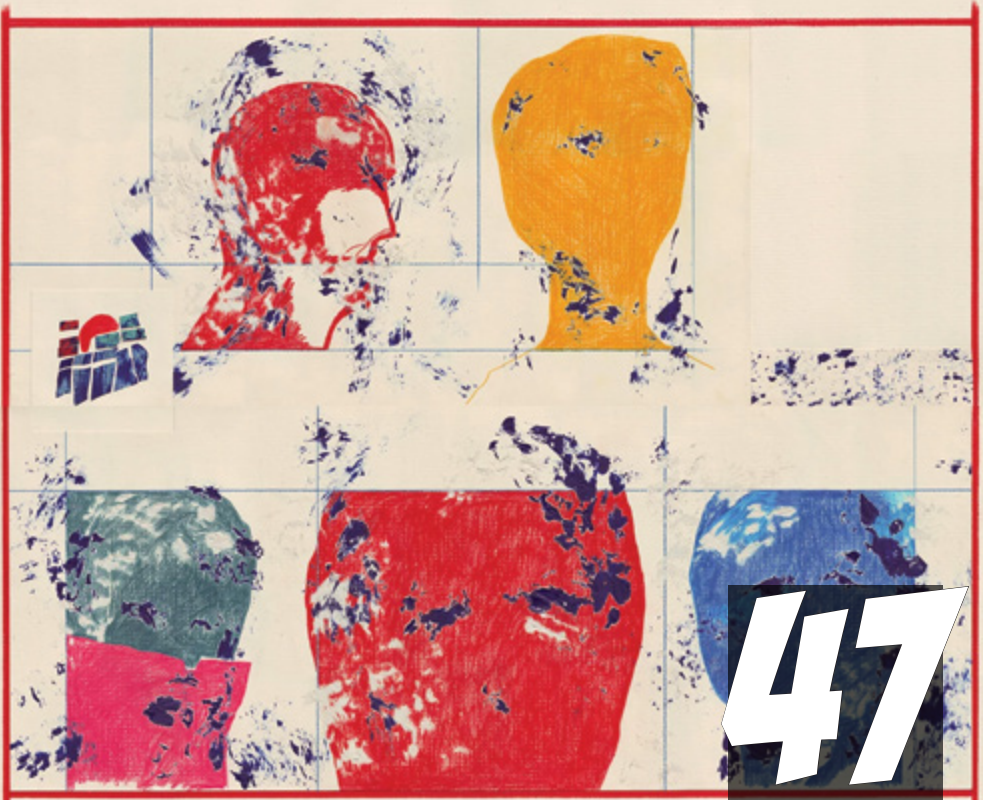
**52:21**

Here stands an album so explosively dramatic and emotionally passionate that any other of our decade's challengers are immediately blown off the screen into obscurity. Song after song spits hideously poetic lyrics through gritted teeth over dead-serious no-frills music and it's noisy and arty and weird and talented and politically charged and aggressively mature and it has these insane chord changes that are completely unpredictable yet really catchy and oh my God there's far too much going on here. But even when pushing these descriptors aside, it's

a wake-up call as to what modern-day "punk" ethics need to sound like, lifting you out of your bed then dropping you onto concrete within the same motion, breaking your jaw then punching you a hundred times per song, a complete disregard to your safety or their's, then you forget to breathe, then you die, good morning.

**"Feelin Kinda Free could be the best apocalypse soundtrack you'll ever hear."**

**— Drowned In Sound**



**47**

**UGHT**

**SUN COMING DOWN**

**UGHT**  
**SUN COMING DOWN**

## End of Year Lists

#8 Norman Records | #11 The Needle Drop | #13 Loud and Quiet  
#29 Stereogum | #42 The Skinny | #55 Crack Magazine | #80  
PopMatters | #87 Rough Trade | #88 Drowned in Sound | #10 Juice  
Nothing

**18 September 2015**  
**Post-Art Punk**  
**Produced by Ought**  
**Label: Constellation Records**  
**40:23**

*In a rare feat of productivity, Ought released both their debut and sophomore records over two years, with their second shot (this one) hitting its target even stronger than their original while refusing to repeat predictable formulas or lose the neurotic charm which introduced us to their genius in the first place. Their fun (almost mocking) take on the posty-punky sound stinks up the place, coming to life as some joyous drunk having the best of times while making everyone else at the party feel uncomfortable. And as gritty and as raw and as bleak as all of this may*

*be, they preserve an unconventional quirk of genuine wit, which provokes hysterics without cracking their signature deadpan expression, and that's their real trick. I mean, surely this album is already a cult classic in some really strange scene out there somewhere? Where exactly would that be, do you think? Do you know how to get there?*

***“Sun Coming Down already feels like a cult classic and an institution that embraces a thousand sides of the punk rock coin while retaining a steadfast originality.”***

**— The 405**





SUSANNE  
SUNDFØR

THE  
SILICONE  
VEIL

**46**

***SUSANNE SUNDFØR***  
***THE SILICONE VEIL***

End of Year Lists

*#42 musicOMH | #7 Juice Nothing*

**26 March 2012**  
**Indietronica Art Pop**  
**Produced by Lars Horntveth**  
**Label: EMI Norway | Sonnet Sounds**  
**44:26**

There are plenty of comparison-dots that critics hurriedly connect between Susanne and other female artists who ride the gothic undertones of electro-piano fairy tale smarts, but this is a rubbish strategy. Because what *The Silicone Veil* achieves is borderline miraculous. It's like a fearless beast momentarily trapped in a snowstorm, vulnerable yet careful to keep the evidence of its weakness hidden deep within dark crevices, available only to those of us who can push aside the music layerings and expose the true dread inside. To further force

distance between association, what Sundfør does is without reliance on peculiarities but instead, she excels in the tried-and-tested technique of focusing her attention on every single moment until they each become monumental, so much so that I loathe writing about this record. I just want to listen to it, who cares about me? Although, it is worth noting that according to every other publication's decade list, I'm the only person who actually gets this thing.

***“This is an album of spectral, elemental romance and intrigue, playfully but precisely woven into a tremulous tapestry of seemingly ever-oscillating sound.”***

**— The Line of Best Fit**



# 45

**JAMIE XX**  
**IN COLOUR**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Mixmag | #2 Pitchfork | #2 Vulture | #3 Gorilla vs. Bear | #3 NME  
#3 Pigeons & Planes | #3 Q Magazine | #3 SPIN | #4 Entertainment  
Weekly | #4 Noisey | #5 FasterLouder | #5 No Ripcord | #5 Pretty  
Much Amazing | #5 Variance | #6 Billboard | #9 Juice Nothing*

**1 June 2015**

**UK Bass**

**Produced by Jamie Smith**

**Label: Young Turks**

**42:44**

Five years in the making, and Jamie xx's long-anticipated debut album finally fell from the heavens and impregnated our systems, compressed into a dazzlingly coloured ecstasy pill, begging for your consumption. So you submit and you allow the compounds to melt on your tongue, but unlike the standard superficial chemicals we are used to, this drug is abundant with rich flavours which perpetually flourish into deeper realms of tropical positivity, lingering with one helluva wonderful aftertaste. And before you know it, you are back in your

youth, a proud part of the British rave counterculture, except the bangers are more subtle now, albeit still very danceable within their relaxed serenity and light elegance. Damn, this one beautiful party. I'm mashed, by the way.

***“In Colour is one of the best albums of 2015 and one of the best dance albums in recent memory, simultaneously a moving homage to London rave culture and a realization of the potential of one of the most exciting and original minds in music today.”***

**— No Ripcord**



**44**

**LANA DEL REY**  
**ULTRAVIOLENCE**

### End of Year Lists

#3 Complex | #3 Slant Magazine | #4 Amazon | #4 Entertainment Weekly | #5 Idolator | #6 TIME | #6 Vulture | #7 Cosmopolitan | #7 Rolling Stone | #10 Crack Magazine | #10 Gorilla vs. Bear | #10 Pretty Much Amazing | #12 Stereogum | #7 Juice Nothing

**17 June 2014**  
**Art Dream Pop**  
**Produced by Dan Auerbach**  
**Label: Polydor | Interscope**  
**51:24**

Take 2012's *Born to Die* and tear the pop right out of it. Strip it of all its colour, wash off the sugar, crumble it into a cinematic performance, inject its pouty lips with misery, force-feed it sedatives, shove it into a dark chamber, tell it to be quiet, and then wait for it to kill itself. That's what *Ultraviolence* is. It lurks like a moody sorceress, exploiting monotony as an art, seducing you with a sultry gloom, a romantic reflection coercing you into a slumber, an adorable sex appeal immersed in poison. Oh, Lana. The heroine on heroin in distress, her hazy eyes filling with tears but

her face betraying no signs weakness as if to say, "Just look at what I have done". The verdict is still up in the air while different lists say different things, but in my book, here is the Del Rey record which sits on the top of her stack.

***"Ultraviolence, a collection of mid-century ballads spiked with blues-rock, is a stunning accomplishment. Its eleven songs whimper and howl, soothe and taunt, hypnotize and thrill."***

**— Pretty Much Amazing**

NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS  
Skeleton Tree

43

**NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS**  
**SKELETON TREE**

End of Year Lists

#1 Crack Magazine | #1 FLOOD | #1 Fopp | #2 Diffuser | #2 Drowned  
in Sound | #2 Gigwise | #2 musicOMH | #2 No Ripcord | #2 OOR  
#2 The New Zealand Herald | #2 The Vinyl Factory | #3 MOJO | #3  
Newsweek | #3 Northern Transmissions | #3 Juice Nothing

**9 September 2016**

**Art Rock**

**Produced by Nick Cave & Warren Ellis**

**Label: Bad Seed Ltd.**

**39:42**

Nick Cave's 15-year-old son Arthur accidentally plummeted to his death from a cliff in Brighton and *Skeleton Tree* was Cave's first artistic statement since this loss. Understandably, these grooves are haunted by the tragedy, sick and traumatised from the painful devastation, left raw from the grief, and then there it is. Right in the centre of this emotional muddle. It's Nick Cave but not as we have ever met him before—once a man who openly discussed mortality for a four-decade career, now suddenly inside of it for the very first time. His

poetic mumblings disconnect from everything, working independently from the droning music, never directly addressing his difficulties, yet unable to escape his broken spirit, and that's what is important. It's that Arthur's soul now lives in this record. You can hear it.

***“I doubt this album inspires anyone to pick up a guitar or start a band and the experience it details is too personal to inspire other bands to make a similar album. But, if this isn't a masterpiece... I don't know what it is.”***

**— Punknews.org**





## End of Year Lists

#5 Rough Trade | #7 The Quietus | #8 Drift | #8 MOJO | #11 Paste  
#11 Stereogum | #14 Treble | #83 Piccadilly Records | #3 Juice  
Nothing

21 June 2019

**Experimental Noise Math Rock**

**Produced by Dan Carey**

**Label: Rough Trade**

**43:10**

Hailed as some late-decade saviours of the noise rock scene, this impossibly tall reputation does not even come close to exceeding the band's abilities in the slightest. They shovel ladle scoops of chaotic flavoured goodness into the dead of your centre which pushes the threshold juuuust far enough without ever falling to pieces, even if it spends the entire runtime sounding like it is about to explode at any second, teetering on the red just because it's funny when you're scared. There's no harm in hypothesising that maybe... maybe... *Black Midi* could grow to be

one of those rock groups who claim the next 10 years as their own? But even if they don't, we'll still have *Schlagenheim*, a fistful of madness which has already inspired itself into position within the book of books. This book, obviously. This is the only book.

***“An experimental, genre-less and extremely noisy sound to exceptional results. *Schlagenheim* is beyond weird. *Schlagenheim* is a legitimate one of a kind record. *Schlagenheim* is a masterpiece.”***

**— Paste Magazine**



## End of Year Lists

#19 The Needle Drop | #4 Juice Nothing

**26 June 2013**  
**Electro Dance J-Pop**  
**Produced by Yasutaka Nakata**  
**Label: Unborde**  
**47:27**

*Come with me and let's march into this hypercute video game, where the fields have been dyed pink and the sun shines ice cream, a world like a colourful childlike cartoon working as a ploy to distract you from some very peculiar maintenance going on behind the scenes. Because while J-Pop itself is defined by adorable catchiness and infectious naivety, this release is smart enough to hold your attention with surprises from another planet in the future, suffering from a pop-overdose tummy ache after chewing on too many lollipops, except distracted by the sparkling*

*beartraps Kyary has set out with a smile on her face, speeding up the dangerous carnival and the spread of your cavities all at once.*

***“It is a ridiculous, terrifying, spectacular reflection of our own grotesque fantasies for [Japan] a projection of a parallel dimension where authors die like samurai and musicians live like Harajuka princesses. And when they cut open their stomachs, the blood tastes just like cherry syrup.”***

**— Tiny Mix Tapes**



## End of Year Lists

#2 Dummy | #3 FACT | #3 Gorilla vs. Bear | #6 KCRW | #6 PAPER  
#6 Pitchfork | #6 The New York Times: Jon Pareles | #7 Dazed | #7  
The Line of Best Fit | #8 NPR Music | #10 The Interns | #10 The  
Vinyl Factory | #14 The Key | #9 Juice Nothing

**2 November 2018**  
**Flamenco nuevo Art Pop**  
**Produced by El Guincho**  
**Label: Sony**  
**30:13**

It takes roughly 12 seconds of playtime before hearts flutter their doors wide open and invite this album right in, allowing it to gently stick tiny pins into the forefront of everyone's consciousness, earning full dedication until the final track has turned the lights off, no interruptions. Regardless of your understanding of Spanish (and I do not understand Spanish), there is no factor strong enough to muffle Rosalía's creative energy which radiates a celestial image of a truly exceptional modern artist, delivering a vibrant pop sophomore

which bursts with curiosity, poking around at the arty surfaces of R&B whilst still rich in its own traditional flavours, wearing itself with pride. And everyone agrees! Google it!

***"It is one of the most exciting and passionately composed albums to appear not only in the global bass tradition but in the pop and experimental spheres this year."***

**— Pitchfork**



## End of Year Lists

#1 CMJ | #1 Complex | #1 Passion of the Weiss | #1 Pitchfork |  
#1 PopMatters | #1 Stereogum | #2 A.V. Club | #2 Billboard | #2  
Consequence of Sound | #2 Entertainment Weekly | #2 Pazz & Jop  
#2 Pigeons & Planes | #2 Vibe | #2 Vulture | #10 Juice Nothing

**27 October 2014**  
**Hardcore Hip Hop**  
**Produced by El-P**  
**Label: Mass Appeal**  
**38:56**

And once again, El-P and Killer Mike are here, kicking down your bedroom door and punching your nose so violently that your face ends up on the inside. Hey, you invited them! Now take a moment and consider every type of media. How rare is it that the sequel obliterates the original? It's rare! But RTJ2 does just that, setting out to destroy every ceiling that the debut put in place and completely achieving that goal as a darker, more experimental monster which was far filthier than what they had done before. And above even this, they are obviously having so much fun while

they pass the dynamite back and forth between each other, confirming that they should never do a record apart ever again.

***“An album like RTJ2 is rare. Decades from now, this album may just be revered as one of the best hip-hop records of our era, the total synchronicity of two talented artists reaching the apex of their prime.”***

**— The Guardian**



# NATALIA LAFOURCADE HASTA LA RAÍZ

HASTA LA RAÍZ / MI LUGAR FAVORITO / ANTES DE HUIR / YA NO TE PUEDO QUERER / PARA QUÉ SUFRIR  
NUNCA ES SUFICIENTE / PALOMAS BLANCAS / TE QUIERO VER / VÁMONOS NEGRITO  
LO QUE CONSTRUIMOS / ESTOY LISTA / NO MÁS LLORAR



38

**NATALIA LAFOURCADE**  
**HASTA LA RAÍZ**

End of Year Lists

#25 Billboard | #4 Juice Nothing

**17 March 2015**  
**Chamber Folk Pop**  
**Produced by Natalia Lafourcade**  
**Label: Sony | RCA**  
**52:54**

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow once said that “Music is the universal language of mankind,” and if there ever was an album which accurately demonstrated this statement, *Hasta la Raíz* could be it. This is an entirely Spanish release, yet any desire for a translation is lightly set free into the wind like florets from a dandelion, gleefully dissolving all language barriers and allowing the participant to adore what is being said without any concern over what it means. And once it has effortlessly removed this particular barricade, it goes to work on all the others, embracing

everyone as a record which is so optimistic and intimate that any age-group or snobby genre connoisseur could find themselves warmed by its mid-tempo coziness. If you thirst for an album that glistens softly with remarkable melodies that never fail to brighten a day, then the quirky personality of Natalia Lafourcade may be the beginning of a very precious journey for you.

**“Natalia Lafoucade’s sixth album, *Hasta la Raíz*, casts a spell with deep feeling, and melodies and lyrics that linger in the mind.”**

**— Village Voice**

SUN

BATH

**37**

**DEAFHEAVEN**  
**SUNBATHER**

## End of Year Lists

#2 Stereogum | #3 A.V. Club | #3 Sputnikmusic | #6 Pitchfork | #6  
The 405 | #8 Cokemachineglow | #11 The Daily Beast | #16 Amazon  
#20 Consequence of Sound | #22 Spin | #24 The Needle Drop | #30  
No Ripcord | #31 Complex | #33 FasterLouder

**11 June 2013**  
**Post-Metal Blackgaze**  
**Produced by Jack Shirley**  
**Label: Deathwish**  
**59:58**

And this was the moment where Deafheaven took a deep breath and inhaled the whole blackgaze genre into their mouth, swallowing it down then storing it in their belly, claiming ownership forever. The band have continued to expand upon their reputation of consistency since this album, but there was always something particularly special about *Sunbather*, a curtain of noise which they wrapped around the listeners head, asphyxiating them until their survival instincts had spiked into peak panic mode, dedicated to a fight or a flight with a foot stuck on either

side of this hyper-indecision line. Enter Deafheaven's world however you see fit but you will always come out the other side exactly how they have moulded you, by beating your soul to shreds while motivating you to keep moving forward. And it's beautiful. And it's flawless.

***“Sunbather is a future classic, no matter where you pigeonhole it, and that’s the mark of a true sonic masterpiece. Black metal, not black metal, just call it what it is: perfect.”***

**— Beats Per Minute**



# 36

**ARCA**  
**XEN**

## End of Year Lists

#4 CMJ | #8 Flavorwire | #10 Bleep | #10 Dummy | #18 Pitchfork  
#20 Tiny Mix Tapes | #26 Rough Trade | #33 Wondering Sound  
#35 Consequence of Sound | #43 Complex | #75 Crack Magazine  
#5 Juice Nothing

**3 November 2014**  
**Wonky Glitch Hop**  
**Produced by Arca**  
**Label: Mute**  
**39:24**

*Xen is a terrifyingly ugly yet somehow fascinatingly alien-insect hybrid, hesitantly hoping to impress you and just you alone. It attempts to construct melodies which desperately cling together in an uneducated effort to mimic a song, but the cogs can't quite get it together and they fall apart. But this creature is determined! Continuously rebuilding in a celebratory manner, except the components have worn down now and are far too unstable to calculate just how music is supposed to sound. And so they crumble once again, more impaired per each step,*

*bits of minimal machinery shedding everywhere then haphazardly shoved back together again, dreaming of reconstructing what you once had before, yet never quite getting there, unable to ever quite achieve what it believes it is destined to achieve. It's a hideously scary idea, but also delightfully flattering!*

***“Xen is decidedly playful, its alien sound palette used to conjure surreal songs that are melodramatic and nursery rhyme-like.”***

**— Mixmag**



## **MOUNT EERIE A CROW LOOKED AT ME**

### **End of Year Lists**

#1 Earbuddy | #1 Norman Records | #1 Tiny Mix Tapes | #2 Digital Trends | #2 NOW Magazine | #2 The Daily Beast | #3 The Needle Drop | #3 The New York Times: Jon Caramanica | #3 Treble | #3 Vulture | #5 Thrillist | #6 The Atlantic | #7 Juice Nothing

**24 March 2017**  
**Contemporary Indie Folk**  
**Produced by Phil Elverum**  
**Label: P.W. Elverum & Sun**  
**41:30**

In 2015, Phil Elverum's wife of 13 years (cartoonist/musician Geneviève Castrée) was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, and despite their best efforts including a GoFundMe campaign, she spiralled quickly and died a year later. And that's what *A Crow Looked at Me* is about. It's not about singing in tune, plucking decorative guitar chords, or rhyming clever words together. It's not even about complete compositions, rather songs that end abruptly, perhaps as symbolic allusions to Geneviève's swift passing, or perhaps because Phil

gives up halfway, unable to hold the pain for any lengthy amount of time. It reads like a man's diary that you have no business reading. Any poetics are lucky accidents, emptied by a bare catharsis which occasionally describes a style of pain you've never contemplated, and then you are right there, and it's horrible. This is not an album. This is why art exists.

***"They are beautifully and simply arranged, but it is not an entertaining album to listen to in any conventional sense, nor can it be shaken off easily. It is, however, the kind of album that makes all others seem frivolous while you're hearing it."***

**— Paste Magazine**





# 34

**SWANS  
TO BE KIND**

## End of Year Lists

#1 *The Needle Drop* | #3 *The Quietus* | #3 *The Wire* | #5 *PopMatters*  
#6 *Pitchfork* | #7 *No Ripcord* | #8 *Pretty Much Amazing* | #10  
*Drowned in Sound* | #11 *The Skinny* | #12 *Crack Magazine* | #13  
*Stereogum* | #14 *CMJ* | #14 *musicOMH* | #1 *Juice Nothing*

**13 May 2014**  
**Experimental Post-Rock**  
**Produced by John Congleton**  
**Label: Young God | Mute**  
**121:12**

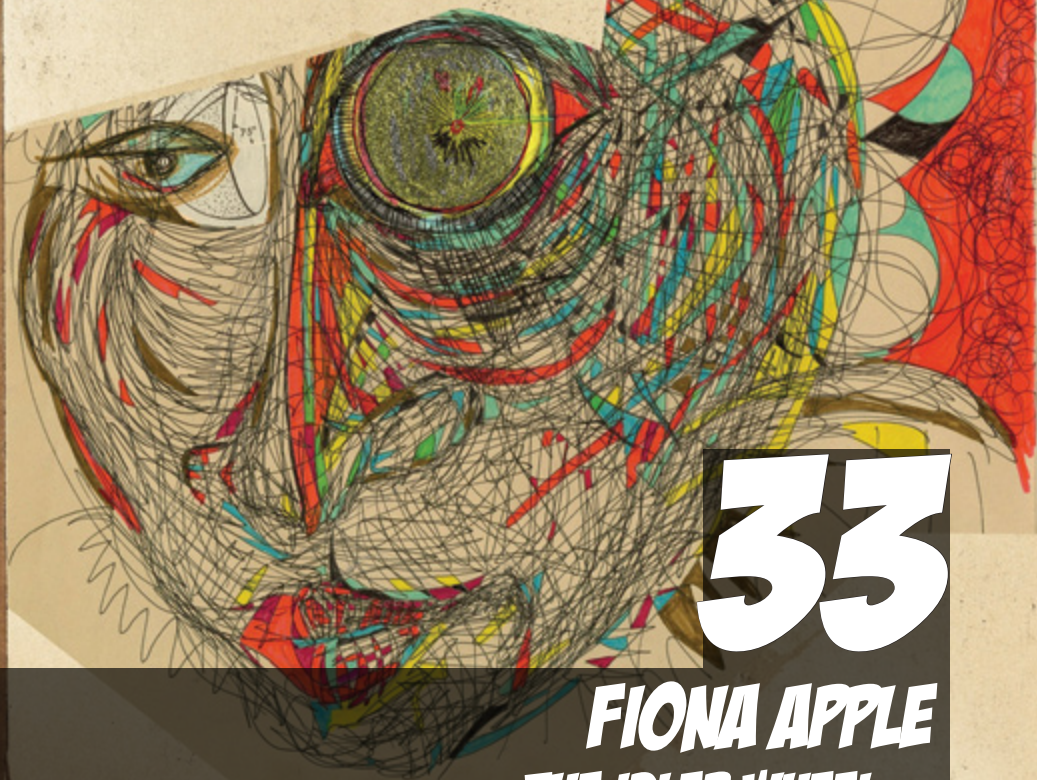
*To Be Kind* is yet another perfect justification for the audio torture crown that Swans have superglued to their skulls. It's an exhausting double album, constructing overwhelming endurance tests by utilising repetitive tension, organising their demonic ceremonies in a row, provoking a hypnotic beauty stirred in with a legitimate fear. It's a lot like a crying baby really: a little less threatening version of their previous work—an almost “cuter” more accessible scenario, some might say—yet still producing panic and annoyance to any adult within earshot. Because

when a baby cries, it's informing you that something is not right, and this patient record ensures that you understand the extent of how wrong everything is, even if it takes two hours to do so. Some albums are difficult to swallow. This album is having a difficult time swallowing you.

**“*To Be Kind* is as vital and unsettling as anything they've ever done, and displays a mastery of their craft that seems almost automatic at this point.”**

**— cokemachineglow**

# FIONA APPLE



# 33

**FIONA APPLE**  
**THE IDLER WHEEL...**

THE IDLER WHEEL IS WISER THAN THE ROLLING WHEEL...  
AND WHIPPING CORDS WILL SERVE YOU MORE THAN ROPES WILL EVER DO

## End of Year Lists

#1 Pretty Much Amazing | #1 Spinner | #1 Stereogum | #1 TIME | #2  
Consequence of Sound | #2 Entertainment Weekly | #3 AllMusic | #3  
Pazz & Jop | #3 Pitchfork | #3 PopMatters | #4 Paste | #5 A.V. Club  
#5 No Ripcord | #5 Rolling Stone | #4 Juice Nothing

**19 June 2012**

**Art Pop**

**Produced by Charley Drayton**

**Label: Clean Slate | Epic**

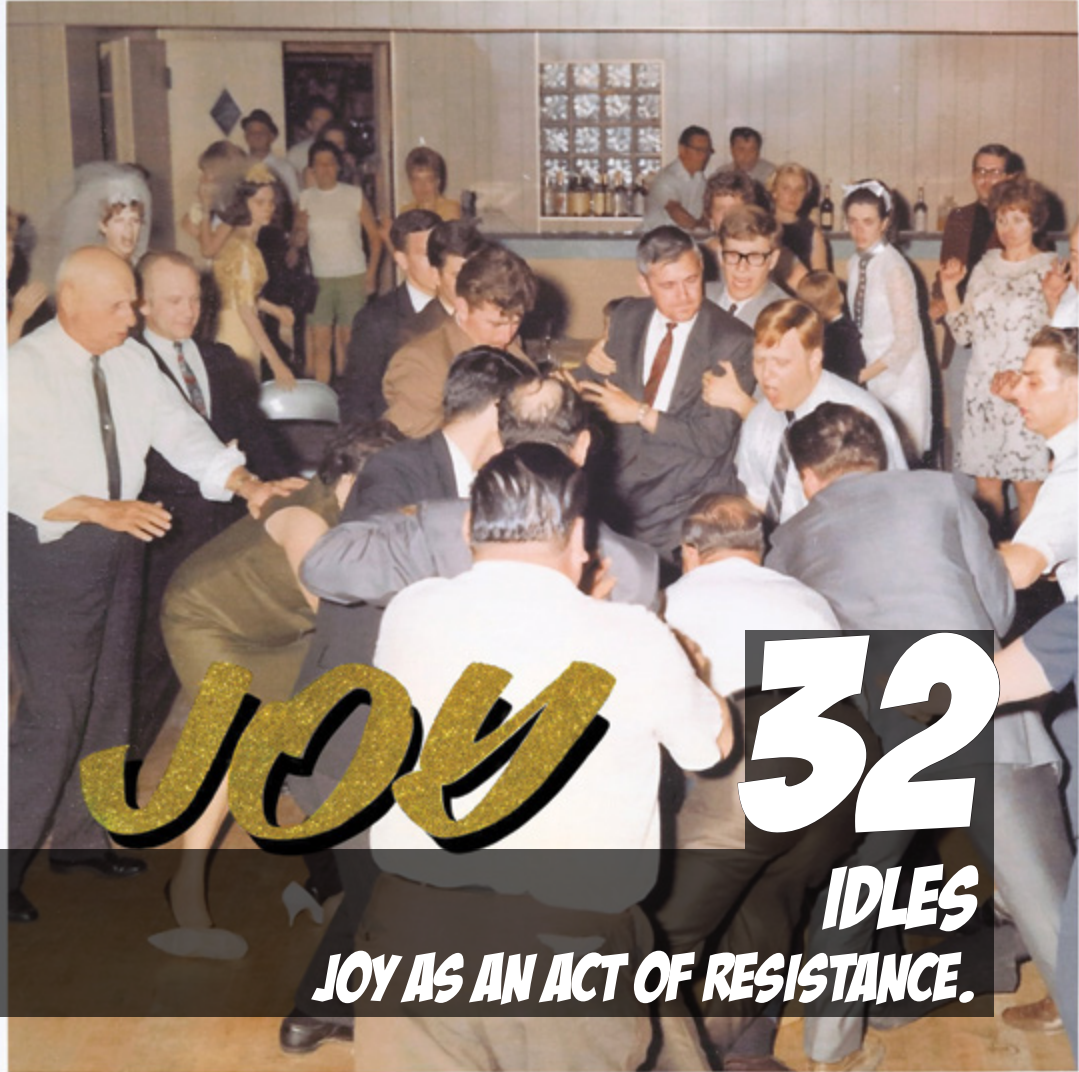
**42:39**

After a seven-year slumber, Fiona rubs the dust from her sad eyes. The music scene has changed. So many piano goddesses have half-heartedly claimed the throne in her absence, but this does not appear to phase her for she does not even seem to notice. Instead, she casually opens her mouth and spreads her entire soul across the globe, wiping the scene clean. She's an adult now, with some newfound intelligence, yet still as lost as a child; heartbroken and confused and making art out of that place which fascinates us just long enough to be engaged. And once we

get close enough, she steals us like some sort of an ambush, digging her claws into the skin and refusing to let go until everyone who tried to be Fiona suddenly becomes embarrassingly irrelevant indeed.

**“The Idler Wheel... is a really incredible album, where Apple has quite cleverly developed musically in just the right way, creating something utterly distinct and different to her earlier work whilst still retaining all the characteristics that won fans over to begin with.”**

**— musicOMH.com**



## End of Year Lists

#1 BBC Radio 6 Music | #1 Far Out Magazine | #1 God Is In The TV  
#1 Louder Than War | #1 MondoSonoro | #1 Northern Transmissions  
#2 Drowned in Sound | #2 Fopp | #3 NME | #3 PopMatters | #3  
Rough Trade | #4 Double J | #7 Juice Nothing

**31 August 2018**  
**Post-Punk Hardcore**  
**Produced by Space**  
**Label: Partisan**  
**42:14**

*“This snowflake’s an avalanche!” Talbot growls on the track called I’m Scum, and no one could summarise Idles’ ideals any better than that. It’s a loud testament that vulnerability does not necessarily equate to a timorous demeanour. A sharp wit can still cut you and a leftie hand can still smash your teeth out. They’re a snarky whirlwind of arty politics, scooping up an army of angry followers behind them, all of us grateful for this singular voice which articulates our foaming outrage without losing the necessary festive bounce required to maintain*

*investment. They educate you on emotional terms. They inspire you to attack with love, fighting the true enemy with tears in your eyes. And they’re the only ones doing anything quite like this.*

***“It is a beautiful slice of humanity delivered by a group of men whose vulnerability and heart has become a guiding light in the fog for an increasing community of fans who don’t just want, but need this.”***

**— DIY Magazine**

PJ HARVEY



LET  
ENGLAND  
SHAKE

31

**PJ HARVEY**  
**LET ENGLAND SHAKE**

## End of Year Lists

#1 BBC | #1 MOJO | #1 musicOMH | #1 NME | #1 No Ripcord | #1  
Slant | #1 The Guardian | #1 The Quietus | #1 Uncut | #2 DIY | #2  
Pazz and Jop | #2 Q Magazine | #2 SPIN | #3 Clash | #3 Drowned in  
Sound | #3 Juice Nothing

**14 February 2011**  
**Art Rock Chamber Pop**  
**Produced by Flood**  
**Label: Island | Vagrant**  
**40:15**

*There's nothing you can say about Polly Jean that hasn't already been said a thousand times, long before this album was even released. Over a three-decade career of absolute power, she has chiselled her name into the absolute permanency of legendary status, undeniably one of the greatest of the greatest who will be analysed long after her life has ended. And yet, somehow, on her 8th album here, she has thrust another peak upwards, jutting out from a catalogue which is basically just peaks, looking like a mountainscape of pure artistic successes. This*

*specific contribution was inspired by the subtly scary grey skies of England, echoing the patriotic optimism of a march towards a deadly battle, drunk and damp from an ominous mood but inspired to keep fighting for the sounds of this. I relate and I don't relate. Regardless, the debate over her best album will never be resolved, but here's another immovable contender for your consideration.*

**“The double in the room on Let England Shake is the whole modern world. PJ Harvey has given us a righteous scare.”**

**— Los Angeles Times**



# QUEEN OF THE WAVE

by PEPE DELUXE



# 30

**PEPE DELUXE**

**QUEEN OF THE WAVE**

AN ESOTERIC  
IN THREE PARTS

## End of Year Lists

*#17 PopMatters | #5 Juice Nothing*

**30 January 2012**  
**Neo-Psychedelia Baroque Art Pop**  
**Produced by James Spectrum**  
**Label: Asthmatic Kitty Records**  
**48:11**

Queen of the Wave sounds like somebody taped together a Sci-Fi Disney movie about a bunch of Vikings who tell tall tales and drink ales in the pub before going to outer-space, taking drugs and sleeping with taxidermy animals, or maybe that's just what I saw? It doesn't matter. What matters is that much of the poppy cuteness handed to you here is designed to stick to your hands immediately, but even more of it takes its time, awarding this album with a whack staying power that is difficult to gauge, unsure when you've finally fully grasped

it. This is because Pepe Deluxé have gone out of their way to use all of their combined smarts and excessive talents to create something detailed and deliberately overstuffed with fun, stitching a journey so entertaining and hysterically speedy that you don't even have permission to think. You couldn't if you tried.

**“Never in recorded history has there been an album of such audible variety, distinctive fidelity and lyrical intensity.”**

**— Exclaim!**



**29**

**RADIOHEAD**  
**A MOON SHAPED POOL**

**End of Year Lists**

#1 GIGsoup | #1 Slant Magazine | #1 The Times The Sunday Times  
#2 A.V. Club | #2 Double J | #2 FLOOD | #2 LA Music Blog | #2  
PopMatters | #2 Uncut | #2 Under the Radar | #3 Esquire (US) | #3  
No Ripcord | #3 OOR | #3 Sputnikmusic | #2 Juice Nothing

**8 May 2016**  
**Chamber Art Pop Rock**  
**Produced by Nigel Godrich**  
**Label: XL**  
**52:31**

*We all get old and then we can't hack it anymore, is that it? Evidently, no, it's not. It doesn't happen to Radiohead anyway. Exhibit A: *A Moon Shaped Pool*, not a new sound, but a graceful summary record where solid songs were the priority and each composition was armed with a little something something special, wallowing in the melodic gloom and apprehensive loneliness only this band know how to deliver with such artistic dignity, finally secure with their age, comfortable in their exposed contemplation, and proving themselves to be the greatest when*

*they don't try to be anything at all. Just let Radiohead be Radiohead! And they could have not made a better record. I am not sure they have ever made a better record? I mean, they almost certainly have, but this is way up there! Best band in the world!*

***“A Moon Shaped Pool is the best album we could expect from a rock outfit already into its third decade of existence, and a superb work from the last important band left in the universe.”***

**— Pretty Much Amazing**



**28**

**KATHRYN JOSEPH**  
**FROM WHEN I WAKE THE WANT IS**

### End of Year Lists

#11 *The Skinny* | #24 *God Is In The TV* | #36 *The 405* | #41 *Fopp*  
#46 *Uncut* | #92 *Drift* | #2 *Juice Nothing*

**10 August 2018**  
**Progressive Folk Art Pop**  
**Produced by Marcus Mackay**  
**Label: Rock Action**  
**44:51**

Kathryn Joseph might pick at the scabs of your familiarity glands when comparing her to other female artists whose witchy quivers twist between inventive peculiarities, but her specific brand of magic separates itself with a drenched sparseness of melancholy, an emotionally draining artiness which finally stimulates that evasive location where just enough quirk can endlessly fascinate without jeopardizing any of the creepy bleakness. What's more, this album is a feat in sequencing perfection, cautiously taking a few songs to properly introduce itself, then slowly

flattening you out, slyly removing organs to really iron the kinks away, until it reaches its conclusion as truly one of the decades most criminally overlooked and underrated masterpieces.

***“She’s broken the curse, she’s woven a spell--and the self-described ‘luckiest little Scottish witch in the world’ is safe to cackle back off into the night, having created possibly the best album we’ll hear all year.”***

**— Clash Music**



plowing into  
The Field of Love

**27**

**ICEAGE  
PLOWING INTO THE FIELD OF LOVE**

## End of Year Lists

#2 The Needle Drop | #3 Crack Magazine | #3 Noisy | #16 NME  
#19 Pretty Much Amazing | #30 Pitchfork | #43 No Ripcord | #46  
musicOMH | #54 Under the Radar | #62 Wondering Sound | #4 Juice  
Nothing

**7 October 2014**

**Post-Punk**

**Produced by Nis Bysted**

**Label: Matador**

**47:54**

Iceage have progressed dramatically per every release, with their third album *Plowing Into the Field of Love* prodding at a whole new zenith—not just for the band, but for the towering post-punk comeback wave as a whole. Because while the inebriated vocal deliveries continue their trademark slur over the fearlessly sloppy backings, there is a definite intention of tidying things up here and there, sustaining itself with a bitter passion that's been worn down, somewhat demotivated but never too tired to stop the brawl, blindly swinging fists and losing

every battle. And by the end, it has peeled back the bandage to show off a much cleaner wound this time, albeit still rubbed raw and ugly as all hell.

***“It’s beautiful and ugly at the same time and, for now, Iceage have found their own unstable sense of peace.”***

**— Pitchfork**





## End of Year Lists

#6 Revolver | #7 The Needle Drop | #16 Sputnikmusic | #20 Decibel  
#26 Crack Magazine | #79 PopMatters | #88 The Quietus | #2 Juice  
Nothing

**7 February 2014**

**Death Metal**

**Produced by Behemoth**

**Label: Nuclear Blast | Metal Blade | Mystic**

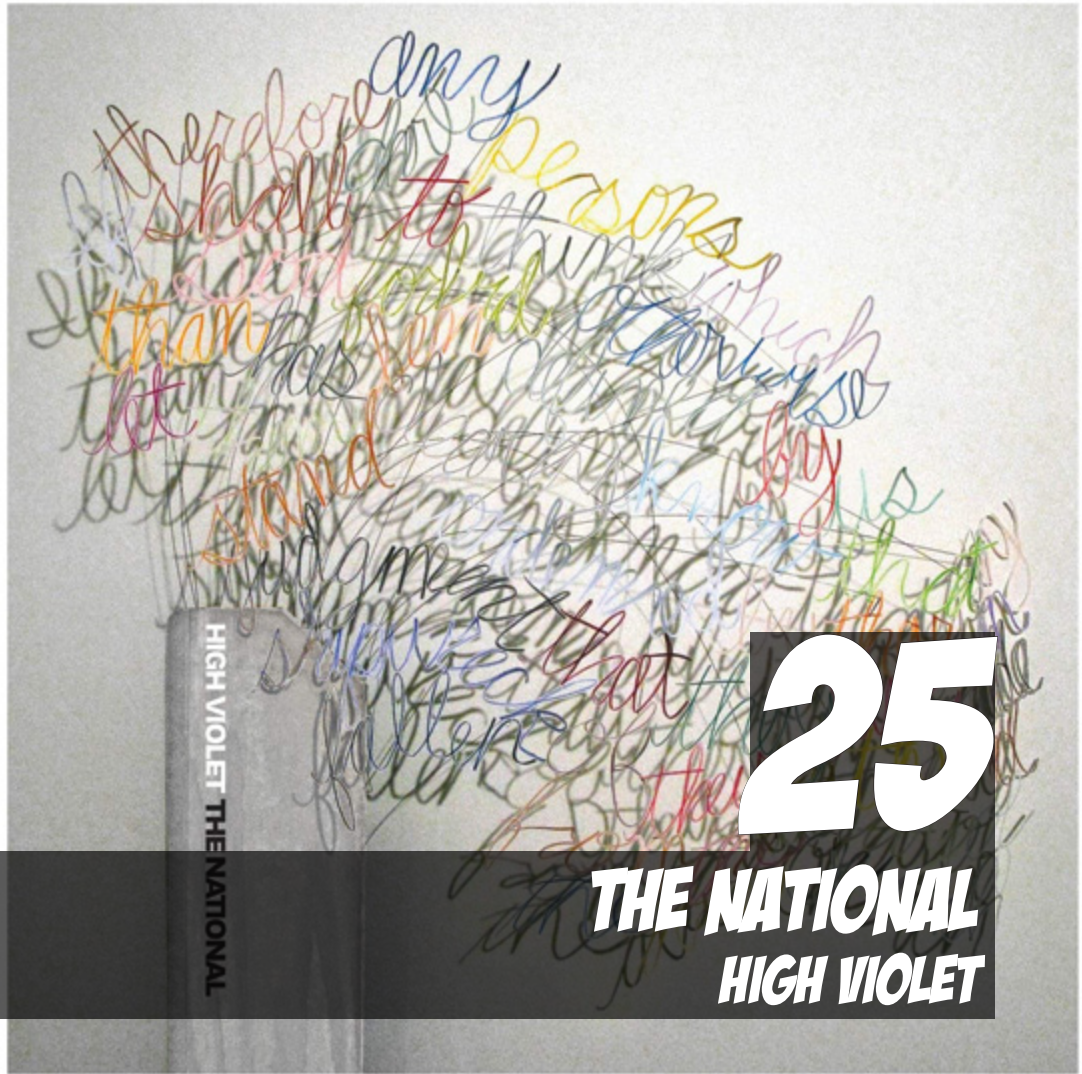
**44:17**

In 2010, Behemoth vocalist Nergal was rushed to the hospital and diagnosed with such advanced leukaemia that even chemo was said to be futile. However, after a bone marrow transplant, months of recovery, and some “miracle”, he rose again, now much more powerful than ever before. The incident shone a bright light on his mortality, but instead of utilising this second life blessing to lead a more righteous lifestyle, he turned down an even more corrupt pathway than before. He exclusively credited his restoration to Lucifer and composed

(yet another) album dedicated to the Dark Lord, affectionately naming it *The Satanist*, featuring guttural screams of worship desperately hooking their horns into the untamed fur of meaty riffs, a filler-less production which was impressively clean for such a dirty deity. And now we have all been awoken. O Father. O Satan. O Sun.

**“The Satanist is as untamed and direct as its title suggests: a flawless paean to free will and the human spirit.”**

**— The Guardian**



## End of Year Lists

#1 DIY | #1 musicOMH | #1 Pretty Much Amazing | #2 Drowned in Sound | #2 PopMatters | #2 Rhapsody SoundBoard | #2 Spinner  
#3 A.V. Club | #3 Prefix | #4 Amazon | #4 No Ripcord | #4 Time | #5 Sputnikmusic | #6 Consequence of Sound | #6 Juice Nothing

**11 May 2010**  
**Chamber Indie Rock**  
**Produced by The National**  
**Label: 4AD**  
**47:40**

*Employing the dark melancholy only The National have the keys to access so bleakfully, the veins of High Violet clog heavy with mournful honesty, a monotone sorrow so dominant that it should relate to your pathetic life perfectly. It's uncomfortably comfortable, wise and neurotic within every humble word, and both lyrically and musically exceptional from the first second to the second second to the last second and every second between. The National have become one of most obvious choices for a "band that has conquered the last two decades of indie flavour",*

*and this record could very well be their crowning achievement—or, at very least, one of their three crowning achievements.*

***"The National should give faith to anyone who has become disillusioned with indie music, anyone who misses a time where it didn't seem like all the musicians thought they were better than you and you could actually relate to the damn words they were singing."***

**— Sputnikmusic**

# THE ARCHANDROID



# 24

**JANELLE MONÁE**  
**THE ARCHANDROID**

JANELLE MONÁE  
SUITES II AND III

## End of Year Lists

#1 PopMatters | #2 Paste | #3 musicOMH | #3 Slant | #5 NOW Magazine | #5 Rhapsody SoundBoard | #5 Under the Radar | #6 A.V. Club | #6 No Ripcord | #6 One Thirty BPM | #6 Spin | #8 Entertainment Weekly | #8 Sputnikmusic | #1 Juice Nothing

18 May 2010

Contemporary R&B Art Pop

Produced by Nate “Rocket” Wonder & Chuck Lightning

Label: Wondaland Arts Society | Atlantic | Bad Boy


68:35

As contemporary R&B grew to be pretty much the most innovative genre of the decade, it doesn't feel too wild to pinpoint this album as the very first indication towards the domination. And yet even when comparing those quality records which had ten years to follow suit, *The ArchAndroid* still stands on its own podium due to its perfectly executed operatic quality, an ambitious conceptual piece revolving around a messianic android who is sent back to free the citizens of The Great Divide using nothing but love. To tell this story, Janelle flexes her stylish

charisma to bend genres at her will without dropping her progressively bouncy momentum or losing track of the story, combining poppy-playfulness and arty-intelligence into one multi-dimensional concoction for over an hour. Which is not long enough, I say!

**“To say it’s ambitious feels like damning with faint praise; its sheer musical scope is spellbinding.”**

**— The Guardian**



**23**

***THE CARETAKER***  
***AN EMPTY BLISS BEYOND THIS WORLD***

**End of Year Lists**

**#4 Tiny Mix Tapes | #14 Gorilla vs. Bear | #22 Pitchfork | #47 Uncut  
#4 Juice Nothing**

**21 June 2011**

**Ambient Turntable Music**

**Produced by James Leyland Kirby**

**Label: History Always Favours the Winners**

**45:21**

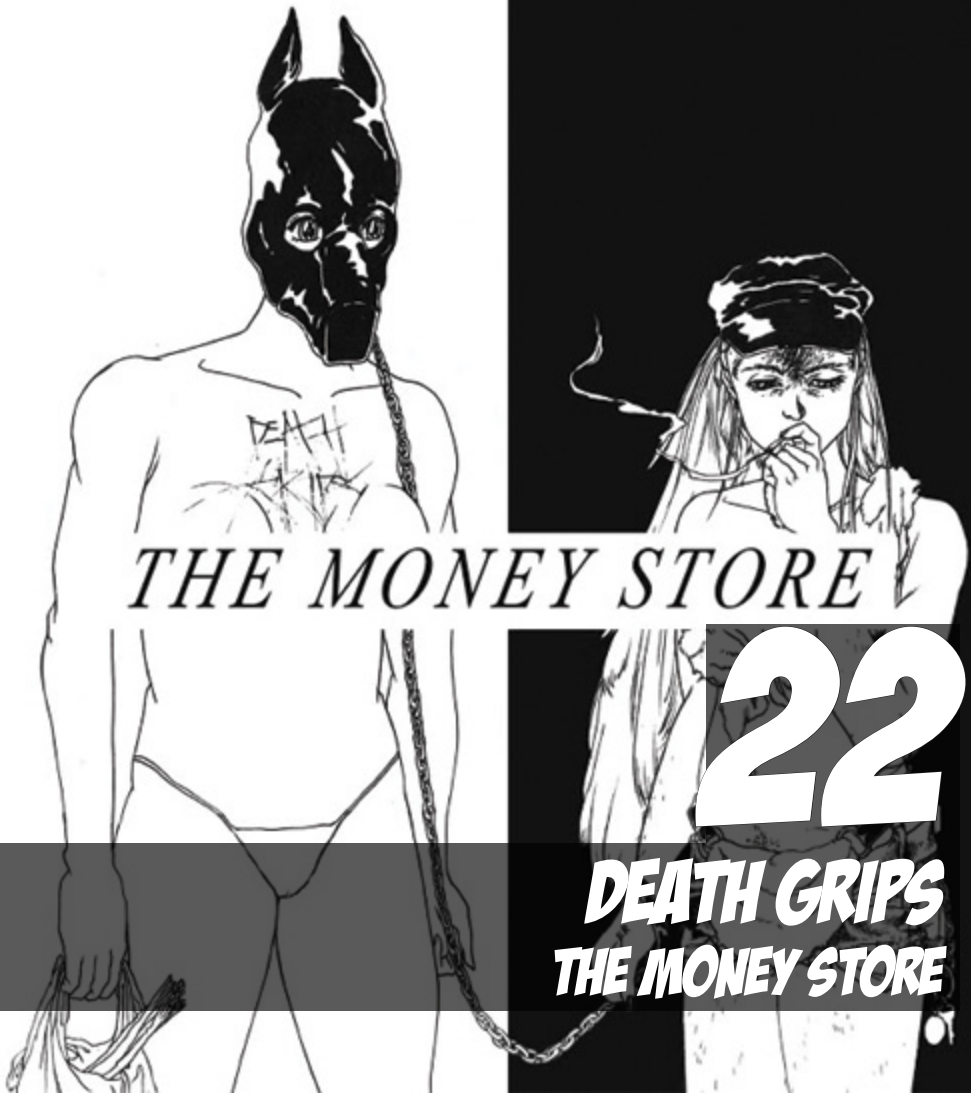
An Empty Bliss Beyond This World is a once-in-a-lifetime ago type of record. It is the hypothetical soundtrack to a movie which got lost in an era that doesn't exist, a damaged black and white film reel forgotten in a dusty attic of a haunted ballroom, barely watchable due to the crackles and scratches but still an immeasurably original piece of spooky work which gradually wears away at your memory until you fade thin and disappear and then become the movie itself. How much of this sample-heavy presentation can be fairly credited as James Leyland

Kirby's (aka The Caretaker's) own work is up for debate, but as only one of the 10 fascinating albums he released this decade(!), the dude definitely wasn't taking any shortcuts. On its own, this record is phenomenal stuff, but if you approach The Caretaker's body of work as one singular project (as you should) then Kirby's tower is far more impressive than any other artist from this decade, hands down.

**“While the record is certainly appreciable on purely musical terms--this is evocative, heart-tugging stuff--when knowledge of Kirby's intent lurks underneath the damaged acetate grooves, it becomes something else entirely: A poignant interrogation of memory loss and aging.”**

**— Resident Advisor**





## End of Year Lists

#1 The Needle Drop | #2 Time Out London | #3 No Ripcord | #4  
Clash | #6 BBC | #8 The 405 | #9 Pitchfork | #15 The Wire | #16  
Consequence of Sound | #16 Tiny Mix Tapes | #18 AllMusic | #23  
Pretty Much Amazing | #6 Juice Nothing

24 April 2012

**Hardcore Experimental Industrial Hip Hop**

**Produced by Death Grips**

**Label: Epic**

**41:08**

*Like a hyperactive child throwing a tantrum in public, an album as abrasively challenging as this is guaranteed to split muso's faces right down the middle, and so be it. But even when considering the overwhelming punk ideals and excess of hip hop testosterone force-fed into your face-holes, this experience is so uniquely intense that you will never forget it. You may enjoy it or you may not enjoy it, but forget it? Impossible. Because even if *The Money Store* feels like it was just thrown together for discomfort's sake, with hard lo-fi sound effects and one-note vocal*

*deliveries, it is never too far from dropping something so nasty and brutal that you have to appreciate Death Grips know exactly what they are doing, continuously punching their way directly to the forefront of hipster conversations at various stages throughout the decade. And that's not normal.*

***“It’s all dizzying and overwhelming, but the sheer brute strength of *The Money Store* stays tempered by a pervasive, unbridled sense of creativity.”***

***— Beats Per Minute***



**KACEY  
MUSGRAVES** SAME TRAILER DIFFERENT PARK

**21**

**KACEY MUSGRAVES**  
**SAME TRAILER DIFFERENT PARK**

## End of Year Lists

#4 Entertainment Weekly | #7 American Songwriter | #8 Idolator  
#10 Amazon | #10 Billboard | #13 PopMatters | #16 The Guardian  
#17 Spin | #20 Paste | #28 Rolling Stone | #42 eMusic | #76 Rough  
Trade | #8 Juice Nothing

**19 March 2013**

**Contemporary Country**

**Produced by Luke Laird & Shane McAnally**

**Label: Mercury Nashville**

**40:11**

Contemporary country had an above-adequate decade but no voices seemed quite as confident or as complete as to what we heard on *Same Trailer Different Park*. For while the warm instrumentation serves Kacey's delightful delivery with loyalty, it's the lyrical content which casually lifts this 24-year-old above this genre's recent unpredictable peak. Her words suffer in small-town observations, distracted by dreams of a better future without granting themselves the luxury of complaining. They speak of truths, conscious and wise yet so simplistic

that they ache deep within the very core of a relatable reality. They are humorous in a melancholic way, a recognised sweetness stirred into the mix rather than sugar-coating the substance, and sometimes, there's a bit of bite too. It's my favourite country record from the last 10 years.

**“Each track evokes an emotion, a giggle, a tear or a memory, but always a hunger for what’s next.”**

**— Country Weekly**



## End of Year Lists

#2 Decibel | #34 Treble | #2 Juice Nothing

**19 July 2019**

**Death Industrial Neoclassical Darkwave**

**Produced by Seth Manchester**

**Label: Profound Lore**

**66:01**

It's an absolute godsend when someone with such a high level of classical training and the vocal prowess of an angel opts to curse us with a path far darker than any of her contemporaries—with additional emphasis on the words *FAR* and *ANY*. Make no mistake, the unique otherworldly experience that is *Caligula* stands alone, impenetrable as the most terrifyingly talented audio piece from the decade, one long and slow decline from serenity to natural animalistic instincts to demonic possession until you sink to eye-level with the devil herself, who

proceeds to perform non-consensual fornication of the vilest kinds to everyone in her proximity. A warning to the brave: it's utterly impossible to listen to anything after this record except nothing at all, only complete silence will do.

***“With *Caligula*, she has created a murderous amalgam of opera, metal, and noise that uses her classical training like a Trojan Horse, burning misogyny to ash from its Judeo-Christian roots.”***

**— Pitchfork**

# SUFJAN STEVENS



# 19

**SUFJAN STEVENS**

**CARRIE & LOWELL**

**CARRIE & LOWELL**

## End of Year Lists

#1 Diffuser | #2 Consequence of Sound | #2 No Ripcord | #2 Sputnikmusic | #2 The Guardian | #2 The Skinny | #3 A.V. Club | #3 musicOMH | #3 The Daily Beast | #3 Uncut | #4 Gigwise | #4 Pretty Much Amazing | #4 Variance | #5 Clash | #5 Juice Nothing

**31 March 2015**

**Indie Folk**

**Produced by Thomas Bartlett**

**Label: Asthmatic Kitty**

**43:35**

*Gone is the progressive artpop Sufjan that we had already accepted into our house. He's changed and I'm worried about him. Introducing a drumless acoustic folk Stevens now, plucked bare and hushed into the natural echoes of good old plain storytelling. The dainty melodies tip-toe softly through the background, whispering requests of attention without demanding them, not wanting to be a bother. "What a cute little record!" you may say to yourself after its conclusion. But it is not. For this bittersweet album can only be understood by learning*

*that these alluringly meagre songs were inspired by the death of Stevens' mother, a catharsis piece serving to clear his personal loneliness to the point of translucency, and allowing the self-pity to spread whilst meditating on the harrowing despair which links hands with the emptiness only loss knows how to grow. Not so cute anymore.*

***"The bona-fide masterpiece that Stevens' career has culminated in, and likely the one that will come to define his career."***

**— Magnet**





# 18

**LORDE**  
**MELODRAMA**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Consequence of Sound | #1 Cosmopolitan | #1 Entertainment Weekly | #1 musicOMH | #1 NME | #1 No Ripcord | #1 Pretty Much Amazing | #1 Rolling Stone (Pop) | #1 Stereogum | #1 Thrillist | #1 Uproxx | #2 Baeble Music | #2 Dork | #3 Juice Nothing*

**16 June 2017**

**Synth Art Pop**

**Produced by Jack Antonoff**

**Label: Universal | Lava | Republic**

**40:58**

After the success of 2013's *Pure Heroine*, Lorde endured a hefty bout of heartbreak, reflecting in solitude, stewing in sadness, then ultimately learning how to convert this grief into art. Meet *Melodrama*, and as the title suggests, this is not fun pop. This is thoughtful pop, where Lorde sees through the trendy mainstream scene by adding her own odd ingredients to spoil the formula, fashioning awkward hooks to puppeteer emotional dance moves from the suffering, sitting alone at the most miserable house party of the year, surrounded by lovers,

rationalising her loneliness as the apotheosis of 20-year-old anguish—too old for puppy love, yet too young to shove the frailty down like us more adult people have learned to do. I feel like there's a lesson to be found in here somewhere, even if it might just be to stay in bed until you feel better.

**“What *Melodrama* confirms most of all is Lorde’s uncanny ability to drill down so precisely on grand emotional themes that would fell lesser songwriters. Tackling a bad breakup certainly isn’t new in pop music, but it’s delivered here with an honesty and energy that is uniquely her own.”**

**— The A.V. Club**



**17**

**KANYE WEST  
MY BEAUTIFUL DARK TWISTED FANTASY**

**End of Year Lists**

*#1 A.V. Club | #1 Billboard | #1 Cokemachineglow | #1 Complex  
#1 Entertainment Weekly | #1 NOW Magazine | #1 One Thirty BPM  
#1 Pitchfork | #1 Prefix | #1 Rolling Stone | #1 Slant | #1 Spin | #1  
Stereogum | #1 Time | #2 Consequence of Sound | #25 Juice Nothing*

**22 November 2010**  
**Hip Hop Art Pop**  
**Produced by Kanye West**  
**Label: Def Jam | Roc-A-Fella**  
**68:36**

*The thing about Kanye is that it would take a lot less effort to hate him. One little musical misstep on his part would create the incision required to rip him a new one until his entire career was in shreds and all the opposition against his egotistical manner would be justified. Whether this happened during the decade or not is up for debate but it certainly hadn't by 2010 as the man continued to release hip hop classic after hip hop classic, with a strong argument often made for this record as his peak achievement. It's autobiographical, humorous, and vulgar whilst keeping*

*his trademark boasts intact, churning his narcissism into part of the product which pissed the antagonists off even further. So good! And even better, is that this is a production masterpiece where each track sounds alive and breathing, surviving the decade with its head held high and sticking out as a permanent fixture on every respectable best-of list throughout. Try and find one without it.*

***“Like Picasso, he acknowledges that the chief enemy of creativity is good taste--which is just as well, since it's not a quality with which he seems over-burdened on My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy. For which we should all be thankful.”***

***— The Independent***



## End of Year Lists

#1 Paste | #1 Pitchfork | #2 Amazon | #2 Billboard | #2  
Consequence of Sound | #2 FILTER | #2 PopMatters | #2 Urban  
Outfitters | #3 A.V. Club | #3 Stereogum | #3 Under the Radar | #4  
Pretty Much Amazing | #4 Q Magazine | #7 Juice Nothing

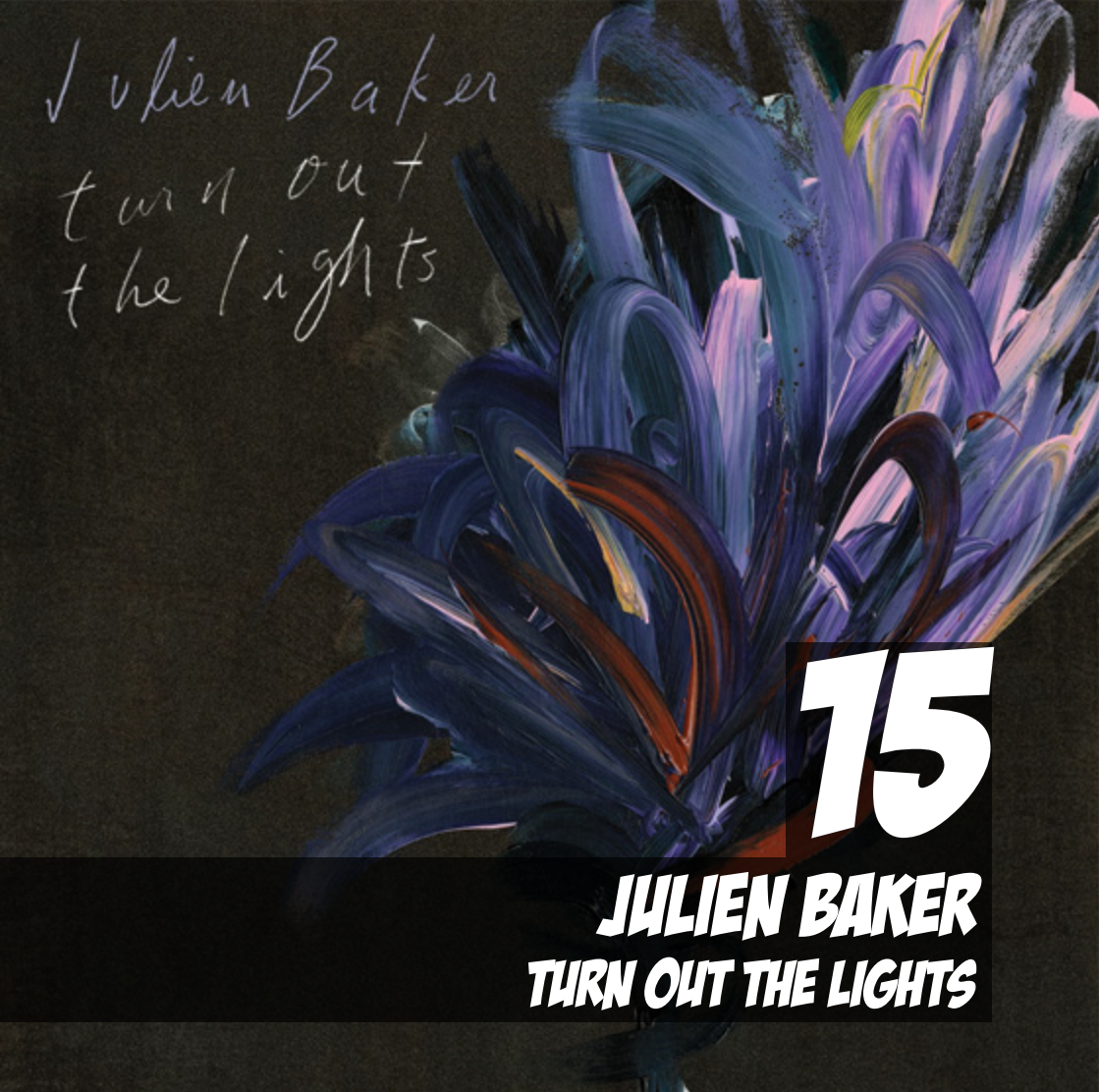
**21 June 2011**  
**Indie Chamber Folk Art Pop**  
**Produced by Justin Vernon**  
**Label: Jagjaguwar | 4AD**  
**39:25**

*Bon Iver's ability to manipulate sound in order to penetrate the audience so directly into the solar plexus is a magic known only to him. The compositions are dramatically arranged by stacking layers upon layers of gentle blankets on top of one another and then pushing them outward until they touch every corner of the room, leaving a gigantic space in the middle. And it is there that Vernon's lonely voice lives, warping into different versions of itself, dropping low and then driving upwards into falsettos, revealing a scared and vulnerable creature who is*

*holding the biggest weapon. It's a true treasure and thankfully nobody dared to overlook it, forever remembered as another perfect example of a defining decade landmark.*

***"It's at once majestic and gentle, a deep breath and a sigh that declares Vernon's transcendence of the turmoil and technique of his unique breakout record and establishes him as an artist who knows exactly what he's doing. Hallelujah."***

**— The Boston Phoenix**



Julien Baker  
turn out  
the lights

15

**JULIEN BAKER**  
**TURN OUT THE LIGHTS**

## End of Year Lists

#2 The Alternative | #2 Under the Radar | #4 The New York Times  
#5 New York Daily News | #6 BrooklynVegan | #6 Vinyl Me, Please  
| #7 The Wild Honey Pie | #8 Earbuddy | #8 The A.V. Club | #1 Juice  
Nothing

**27 October 2017**  
**Indie Folk Slowcore**  
**Produced by Julien Baker**  
**Label: Matador**  
**40:01**

Julien Baker is an open book, and her pages are bleeding all over your fingers. She pleads for help, not for reasons of surrender, but because she has not yet let go of hope. She is forcing all of her reserved energy to reach her open hands outwards, exposed and defenceless, not begging for sympathy nor losing herself in some dramatic display of exaggerated tragedy, but rather cleaning her guts up and presenting a dignified version of emptiness. Her tears have dried upon her straight expression while she relays her beaten message with heavenly vocal

notes, lifting me off of my feet whilst the grey overcast pushes her down, leaving her behind. This is the beauty in pain that everyone talks about, but with *Turn Out the Lights*, you become sorely aware of how seldom you actually hear it. Furthermore, on a personal note, I went through quite a testing break up in 2017, and I cried so hard to this record that I owe Julien a lot more than most people do. So here we are then.

**“What elevates *Turn Out The Lights* is that it’s sensory as well as earnest, personally destabilising while artfully assured; it oscillates in the spilling synaesthesia of panic attacks, the dizzying clarity of epiphany, the paralysing futility of depressive episodes, the unfathomable locus of being okay.”**

**— The 405**





LA DISPUTE

14

**LA DISPUTE**  
**WILDLIFE**

## End of Year Lists

*#7 The Needle Drop | #9 Juice Nothing*

**4 October 2011**  
**Post-Hardcore Screamo**  
**Produced by La Dispute**  
**Label: No Sleep**  
**57:50**

*If your preferred slice of music is driven by a raw heart-wrenching passion and articulate lyrical poetics, then there's a chance that no album will erupt goosebumps all over your body quite like *Wildlife* can do. The post-hardcore riffs hit relentlessly hard and definitely carry the songs from beginning to end, but it is Dreyer's vocal deliveries which truly bless La Dispute with their trademark trauma, a monotone storytelling that leaves by itself to wander, working independently of the music, these two components only occasionally meeting up to collaborate in the*

*emotional mugging. As far as audio art goes, it's an experience so poignant that it may leave you with a hollow void inside of your stomach, of which only time away will heal. And once it heals, you'll remember that you actually quite enjoyed the despair, and then you'll return for another carving session.*

***“Wildlife is the best of both worlds, serving up the energy and power fans have come to expect from La Dispute, but showing a maturity beyond the band's years.”***

**— Allmusic**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Rough Trade | #2 Crack Magazine | #2 Time Out New York | #3 Drowned in Sound | #3 The 405 | #4 Bleep | #4 Clash | #5 Dazed  
#5 musicOMH | #5 Resident Advisor | #5 The Guardian | #7 The Needle Drop | #7 The Vinyl Factory | #2 Juice Nothing

**20 January 2015**

**Art Pop**

**Produced by Arca**

**Label: One Little Indian | Megaforce | Sony**

**58:36**

Three happy songs written into *Vulnicura*, and Björk's 13-year relationship with Matthew Barney broke, tearing a yonic wound so deep into her chest that the exhausted anguish exposed itself then escaped, ruining the music as she fell. This fragile torment weighed heavy on the three songs which followed; the true heartbreak epicentre of the album, drowsy and lost within the daze of loneliness many of us recognise so well. For the first time in 38 years, we realised that Björk's was human, her sincere vocals absorbed into the rich string orchestrations while

Arca's drums thumped irregularities, glitching the comfort without glitching the intimacy. And then, like all things, time eventually heals itself, the closing three songs reflecting upon the journey with additional strength and less self-pity, damaged but wiser, determined to move on. I understand. Relationships, am I right?

***“Vulnicura is a harsh and demanding album, one to sink into with a good set of headphones. But it’s also Björk’s most--if not first-- personal record.”***

**— Pretty Much Amazing**

**channel** ORANGE

**12**

**FRANK OCEAN  
CHANNEL ORANGE**



## End of Year Lists

*#1 A.V. Club | #1 Consequence of Sound | #1 Entertainment Weekly  
#1 musicOMH | #1 Paste | #1 Pazz & Jop | #1 PopMatters | #1 Slant  
#1 SPIN | #1 The Guardian | #2 AllMusic | #2 BBC | #2 Exclaim! | #2  
FILTER | #2 Gigwise | #3 Juice Nothing*

10 July 2012

Alternative Contemporary R&B

Produced by Frank Ocean

Label: Def Jam

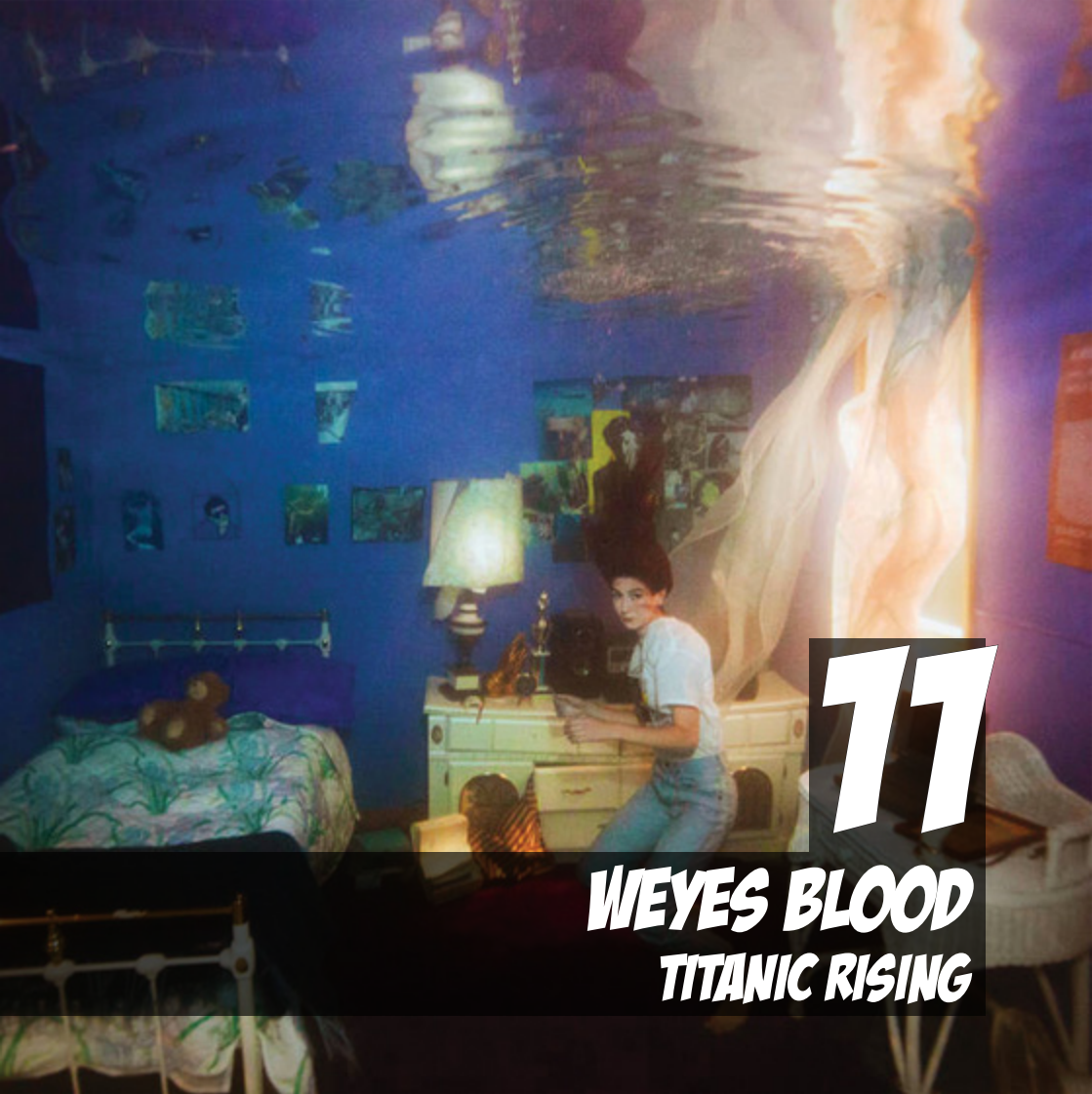
62:18

*With sinful gospels speaking at the top of their lungs (even when just whispering), all of the heartbreak and sex and drugs and sadness and ugliness of Channel Orange was expertly balanced by the sensual music itself. This was a minimalist bouquet of flavour, cooked well-done, then left to cool down, presented on the most expensive of platters with an unwashed fork to match. Why are we eating flowers? There isn't any easy way of explaining Channel Orange's overwhelming response except to point fingers towards Frank Ocean as a person, the man offering*

*a rare and sobering look into his own human which was not only a genuinely moving honour but also one helluva heart-slowingly sexy affair. With that, this record effortlessly became one of the best early representatives of what the entire 2010s would ultimately offer, and alternative R&B was never the same again.*

***“For now, the best tribute you can pay Channel Orange is that, while it plays, you forget about the chatter and just luxuriate in a wildly original talent.”***

***— The Guardian***



## End of Year Lists

#1 Paste | #1 Uncut | #2 Rough Trade | #4 Uproxx | #10 The Skinny  
#11 Treble | #13 MOJO | #17 Stereogum | #26 Consequence of  
Sound | #33 Drift | #1 Juice Nothing

**5 April 2019**  
**Baroque Art Pop**  
**Produced by Jonathan Rado**  
**Label: Sub Pop**  
**42:22**

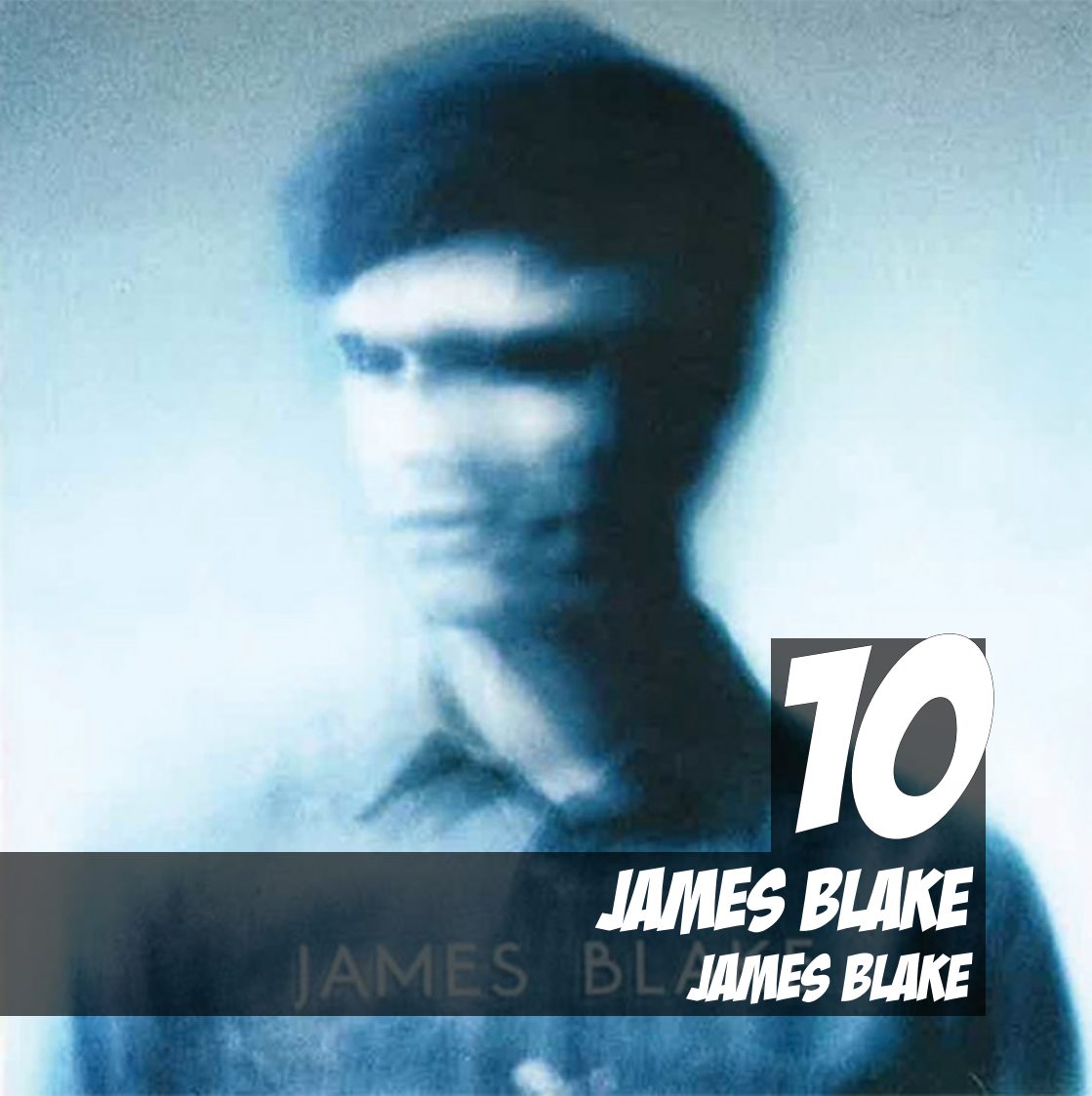
If someone lied to you and informed you that this very record was undeniably the greatest record from the entire 1970s, you may give it a listen and then be so inclined to agree with them. Because that's what *Titanic Rising* sounds like; an absolute long-lost classic which deserves to be praised as an album in the tallest of historical leagues. It's like a glowing precious stone which only floats along once every decade or so, gradually filling the room with such spectacular subtleties that, by the time you've stopped breathing and everything else has been washed

completely out of the picture, it's already too late. What an honour it is to have this record in our circulation now. How monumentally thankful we all should be.

***“Titanic Rising is a revelation. These opulent, sculptural songs have sacrificed none of Mering’s idiosyncrasy, or ability to unnerve.”***

**— Mojo**





**10**

**JAMES BLAKE**  
**JAMES BLAKE**

## End of Year Lists

*#2 Tiny Mix Tapes | #3 No Ripcord | #4 Amazon | #5 Urban Outfitters | #6 Consequence of Sound | #6 The Guardian | #8 Pretty Much Amazing | #9 Billboard | #11 FILTER | #12 FACT Magazine | #12 Pitchfork | #13 The Needle Drop | #1 Juice Nothing*

**7 February 2011**  
**Alternative Art Pop Electronic R&B**  
**Produced by James Blake**  
**Label: ATLAS | A&M | Polydor**  
**38:00**

A lot of modern-day artists attempt to dazzle their audiences with loud flashes of intensity or complex patterns of stimulation, and that's fine. However, sometimes it takes a true genius to step away from the clamour, only to discover that a louder power can be found within the quiet spaces between everything. James Blake's debut is a masterpiece exercise of restraint, taking the minimalism to such levels of sparseness that it's often not even there, only to reinforce the importance of the subtle construct using a transparent coating of cold

glue extracted from hushed bass wobbles and manipulated falsettos. What's more, this was merely an introduction to a musician who continued to conquer the decade without ever repeating this same formula again, surely one of the top five most innovative artists of the decade. Maybe the top three? I wouldn't even be bothered if you stated a case for number one.

**“James Blake is an essential for anybody interested in witnessing how pop music can and will continue to change, progress, and grow into something new with time.”**

**— Consequence of Sound**



## End of Year Lists

#1 Clash | #1 Q Magazine | #2 Amazon | #2 Billboard | #2 DIY | #2 Entertainment Weekly | #2 MOJO | #2 musicOMH | #2 NME | #2 No Ripcord | #2 One Thirty BPM | #2 Stereogum | #2 Time | #2 Under the Radar | #3 Consequence of Sound | #9 Juice Nothing

**3 August 2010**  
**Indie Chamber Rock Pop**  
**Produced by Markus Dravs**  
**Label: Merge | City Slang | Mercury**  
**63:55**

Around the point of *Suburbs*, Arcade Fire had annoyingly become the most popular go-to choice for the champions of the art indie world, this third record topping an already impeccably impenetrable catalogue, exceeding the soaring hype with a charming maturity and an arrogant smirk which conspired together as one unified piece, frequently tapping absolute perfection upon the shoulder, hello. To succeed at being indulgently artistic without alienating the listener is an act so masterful that hardly any craftsmen have ever achieved it, hence why

the critical acclaim and commercial appeal did start to beg questions about whether the Radiohead torch had finally been passed over? I mean, it didn't quite turn out that way in the end, but it was an intense question all the same.

***“They may well have delivered their masterpiece.”***

**— Q Magazine**

# blond



8

**FRANK OCEAN**  
**BLONDE**



PARENTAL  
ADVISORY  
EXPLICIT CONTENT

## End of Year Lists

#1 BLARE | #1 Dazed | #1 Esquire (US) | #1 Gaffa (Norway) | #1 Hypebeast | #1 Noisey | #1 Pigeons & Planes | #1 The Atlantic | #1 The Skinny | #1 TIME | #1 Uproxx | #1 Vulture | #2 Clash | #2 Pitchfork | #2 SPIN | #4 Juice Nothing

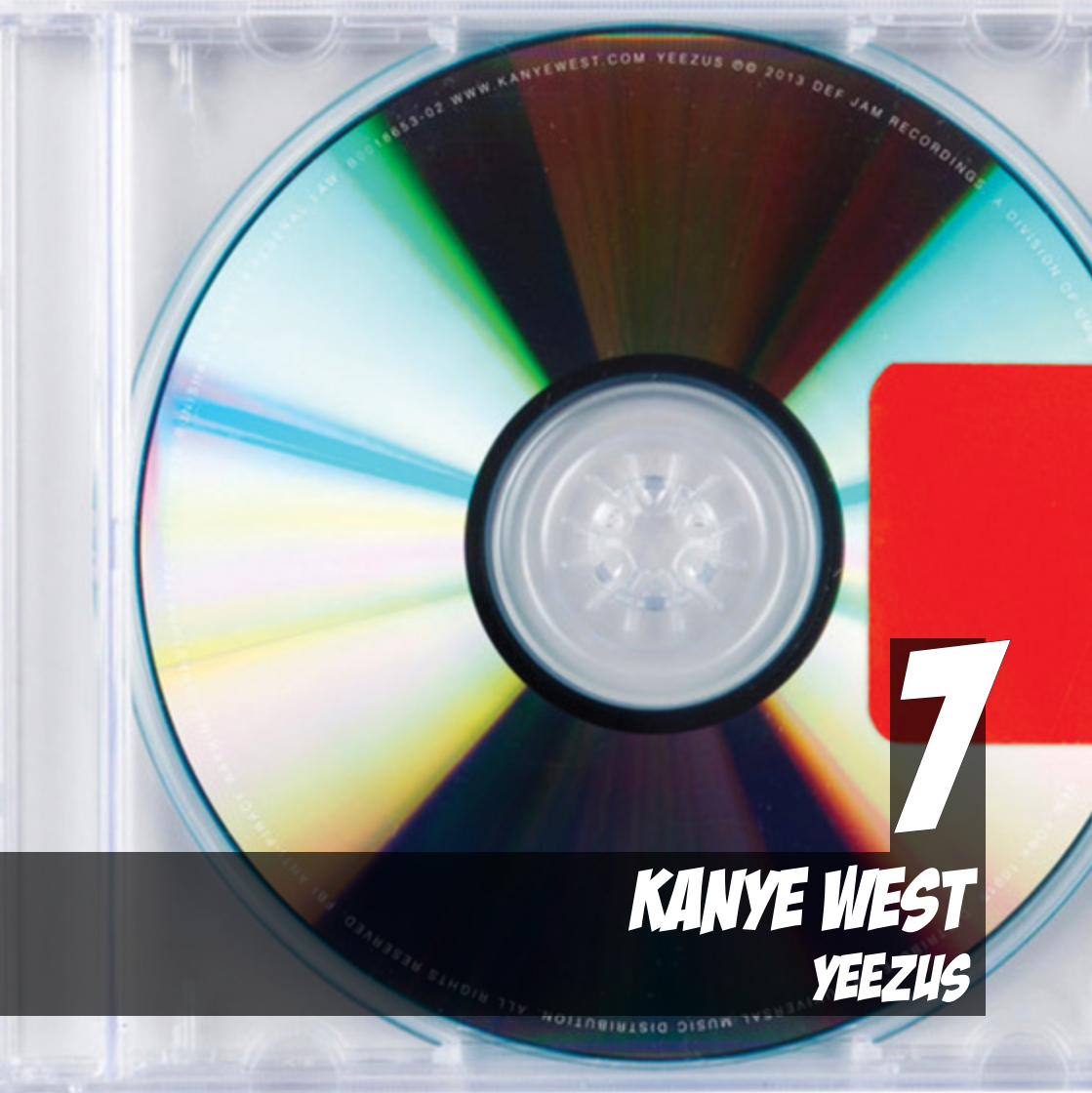
**20 August 2016**  
**Alternative R&B Neo-Soul Art Pop**  
**Produced by Frank Ocean**  
**Label: Boys Don't Cry**  
**60:08**

The impossible follow-up. The endless delays. The pressure of having everything to prove, now tripping up on promises which only further fed into the anticipation machine. But instead of succumbing to the buzz of tinnitus smothering his name, Frank shoves us all aside and took a deep breath. In an abstract daydream, he let himself get lost, surrounded by clutter and piles of mournful textures, but structured to accommodate ample walking room between them. He takes you by your hand then leads you around, helping you to locate new corners within old

corners you hadn't noticed before, and then he shows you that exact same corner and again it has changed, different with every head turn until you break down into emotionless tears of druggy detachment. What a fancy type of sadness this is. A luxurious vulnerability. A boring moment of emptiness ached into life then dressed up real nice. Frank Ocean. He actually did it.

***“In time, Blonde will surpass its hype. The album’s greatest feat is its ability to expand when it’s listened to in a new mindset, each reveal seemingly so apparent that you wonder how you missed it the first time.”***

**— Consequence of Sound**



7

**KANYE WEST  
YEEZUS**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 A.V. Club | #1 Complex | #1 Consequence of Sound | #1 Entertainment Weekly | #1 Piegons & Planes | #1 Pretty Much Amazing | #1 Spin | #1 Stereogum | #1 The Daily Beast | #1 The Guardian | #1 TIME | #2 Billboard | #1 Juice Nothing*

18 June 2013

Experimental Hip Hop

Produced by Kanye West

Label: Def Jam

40:01

In the contest of hip-hop, there are less than a handful of “mainstream” records which jut so far away from the tree that they snap off and poke someone’s eye out. Yeezus is the dangerous epitome of that concept, a gut-punching record hellbent on doing everything except play it safe, uncompromising in its dirty visions and unafraid to prod your discomfort glands until they inflame. You can shout at it all you want but it’ll only shout back louder. Because this is what happens when an eccentric genius crippled by narcissism spends his entire career attempting

to convince the world that he is God, and now his accolades have nothing left to prove. He made the party, and goddamnit, he can ruin it if he wants to. And he wants to, by aggressively harassing you until his career is under threat but then he accidentally resets the game instead. It’s the absolute summit following nine years of pure rap classics from the dude, and sadly, he could never quite muster the same energy again, his gradual, heartbreaking demise spiralling only after this.

**“Kanye West doesn’t give the listener a second to realize the album is more a masterly response to a masterpiece than a masterpiece itself. With one sweep of the hand, West brushes away expectations. And then he sticks you squarely across the face.”**

**— Pretty Much Amazing**





6

JON HOPKINS

**JON HOPKINS**  
**IMMUNITY**

## End of Year Lists

#1 XLR8R | #5 Q Magazine | #5 The 405 | #6 Rough Trade | #7  
Drowned in Sound | #7 Time Out London | #8 The Line of Best Fit  
#9 musicOMH | #11 NME | #12 BBC Radio 6 Music | #13 The Fly  
#17 The Quietus | #18 Resident Advisor | #10 Juice Nothing

**3 June 2013**

**Microhouse IDM**

**Produced by Jon Hopkins**

**Label: Domino Records**

**60:00**

Four albums into his career and Hopkins had finally cemented himself into the highest league of electronic producers, and he achieved this by never losing the curiosity of a student. Each project continues directly on from the previous work, a definite decision to amplify what he is good at then addressing what he lacked by whetting the corners until... *Immunity*. This record is the epitome of his internal exploration, formulating electro noises that you didn't know existed then working with them in a harmonious almost organic manner, growing a soul

within the mechanics. And, unlike almost everyone, he was never about the bigger picture. Rather, Jon magnifies the tiniest of working cogs, taking your face right up close to the most miniature of sounds which creep around the machine, fueled by genuine emotions while they dance to keep the whole thing breathing. It is an outbreak of goosebumps, a glimmering pile of sharp objects, and truly a piece of art which proves that robots are humans too. It's also unchallenged as the greatest electronic record the decade has to offer to the point of embarrassment.

**“This is an intelligent and deeply human album and it would be no exaggeration to say that it’s already a modern classic.”**

**— musicOMH.com**



**KENDRICK LAMAR**  
**GOOD KID, M.A.A.D. CITY**

BY: KENDRICK  
LAMAR

**EXPLICIT CONTENT**

## End of Year Lists

#1 BBC | #1 Exclaim! | #1 FACT Magazine | #1 No Ripcord | #1 Pitchfork | #2 Pazz & Jop | #2 SPIN | #2 The 405 | #2 The Needle Drop | #2 TIME | #3 Consequence of Sound | #3 Gorilla vs. Bear | #3 Obscure Sound | #3 Pretty Much Amazing | #1 Juice Nothing

**22 October 2012**

**Conscious West Coast Hip Hop**

**Produced by Anthony “Top Dawg” Tiffith & Dr. Dre**

**Label: Aftermath | Interscope | Top Dawg**

**68:23**

Two albums in and Kendrick delivers an instant hip hop classic, done, thanks for coming everyone, it's over. His trick was to exploit those same old school reliable principles then present them in a fresh and unpredictable package, shooting forth his recognisable voice with high-speed but restrained flows, tightly tying it all together with a dead-serious concept where Kenny reminisces about his difficult adolescent years complete with well-acted skits and a dash of humour for much-needed relief. Songs change into other songs right in the middle

of themselves, the guest list is an A-list affair, and I could write essays about the frequent MOMENTS on this album which were unlike anything I've heard in my life, the primary indication that we had a genius on our hands. Imagine being another famous rapper and hearing this record for the first time? It must have been nauseating to realise that your entire world was coming apart as you watched the bar rising in front of your eyes, in full knowledge that there was nothing you could do.

**“He’s given us all he could possibly give us; an album worthy of being called a classic.”**

**— DJ Booth**



4

**DAUGHTERS  
YOU WON'T GET WHAT YOU WANT**

## End of Year Lists

#1 The Needle Drop | #2 Norman Records | #2 Sputnikmusic | #7 Gaffa (Sweden) | #12 No Ripcord | #13 The Quietus | #18 The A.V. Club | #24 The 405 | #26 PopMatters | #28 BrooklynVegan | #35 Crack Magazine | #36 Consequence of Sound | #1 Juice Nothing

**26 October 2018**

**Industrial Noise Rock**

**Produced by Seth Manchester & Nicolas Sadler**

**Label: Ipecac**

**48:40**

This... **THIIIIIS...** is the ugliest of hauntings, agitated by such an apathetic hatred that it is legitimately a terrifying notion that human beings are out there making music like this. Daughters have built an emotional washing machine endlessly stuck on the threatening setting just before a panic attack, all the while something is watching you go, crouching with its humourless eyes, taunting your highest defences until you have whittled yourself down to a twig. You want to act your age without losing your bite? You want to push the boundaries of art without

succumbing to gimmicks? Here you go, this band just rewrote the fucking manual from scratch. No matter what your end-of-the-decade list looks like, this record is the audio representative of chocking literally everything else to death with its own faeces. The albums that follow in this book have obviously been chosen for their own specific reasons, but just know that they would lose in a fight against this guy. Badly. It would be horrible to watch.

**“Daughters have pulled off one of the great comeback albums and further cemented themselves as a band with such singular creativity that they’re nearly peerless. It may not sound like the album you thought you wanted, but the open-minded listener might find it’s precisely what was needed.”**

**— Exclaim!**



## End of Year Lists

*#1 A.V. Club | #1 Double J | #1 Drowned in Sound | #1 Gigwise | #1  
Les Inrocks | #1 Louder Than War | #1 MOJO | #1 musicOMH | #1  
Nerdist | #1 Newsweek | #1 No Ripcord | #1 Northern Transmissions  
#1 Now Magazine | #1 OOR | #1 Paste | #1 Juice Nothing*

**8 January 2016**

**Art Rock**

**Produced by Tony Visconti**

**Label: ISO | RCA | Columbia | Sony**

**41:14**

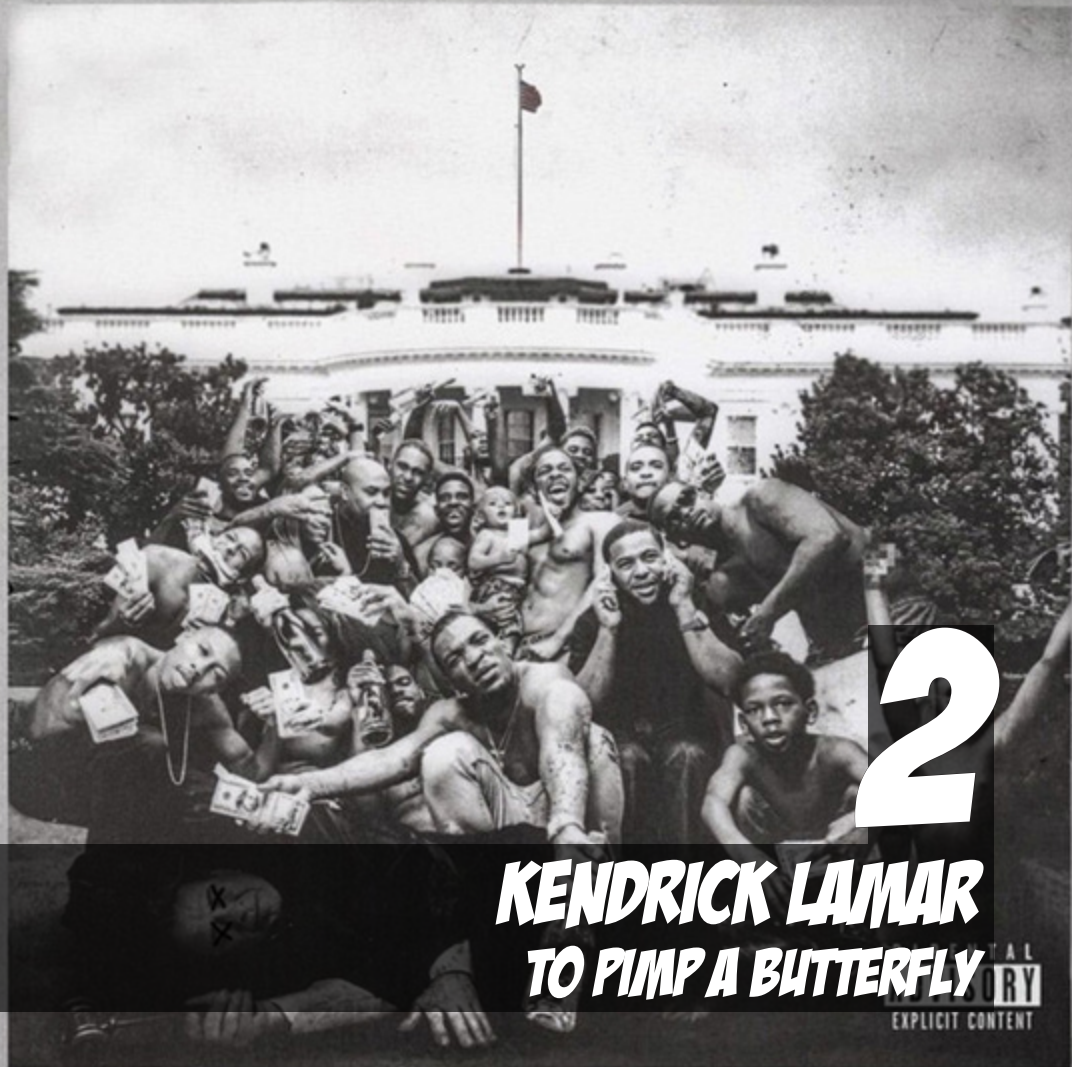
Imagine deathbedridden Bowie reading the reviews to what only he knew would be his final release. Critics tumbled to its feet, worshipping the jazzy clutter and unified avant-garde difficulty as the most inventive of his catalogue—an unfathomable achievement for a man who had built a career out of reinvention. He was acting his age and indulging in his own creepy tastes, which was always what he was best at anyway. I imagine all of these things, followed by his knowing smirk, Bowie whispering inaudibly ‘now watch this’, dying two days later.

And then *Blackstar* changed. This was not an album. This was a deliberate message, cryptically informing us of his imminent departure, as he finally plummeted into space just like he’d promised for all those decades before. Hence why this record is the most important piece of musical work ever made. The deepest album in history. The perfectly executed full-stop to arguably the most impressive career of all time. And no record has ever hurt on the same level.

**“Only by placing the music in the context of David Bowie’s death has that roadblock been removed--something I’m quite certain was deliberate on the part of the artist, as musical context so often is. And once that context is realized, so is the dark beauty of *Blackstar*.”**

**— Sputnikmusic**





## End of Year Lists

*#1 A.V. Club | #1 Billboard | #1 Clash | #1 Complex | #1  
Consequence of Sound | #1 Crack Magazine | #1 CraveOnline | #1  
Dazed | #1 Entertainment Weekly | #1 FasterLouder | #1 FLOOD | #1  
Mashable | #1 No Ripcord | #1 Noisey | #1 Juice Nothing*

15 March 2015

**Conscious West Coast Hip Hop Jazz Rap**

**Produced by Anthony “Top Dawg” Tiffith & Dr. Dre**

**Label: Aftermath | Interscope | Top Dawg**

**78:51**

There have only been two hip hop classics from this decade, and Kendrick wrote both of them. To Pimp a Butterfly, in particular, superglued the man’s mastery to the very top of the podium by preaching about politics, cherishing black culture, and dealing with fame through an incomprehensible amount of ideas, densely stuffed into the obscurest of cracks between complex funky rhythms, untidy jazzy experimentations, and a fresh outlook on the old school hardcore West Coast aesthetics. His confrontational protests attack

fiercely from every angle, stitching unrelentingly fast flows together with countless contributors, blasting one intensely ballsy and out-of-control album through the stereo, blending our brains into a pulp then jet-fueling upwards in a victory that this genre has never quite seen before. It will last forever in a way I doubt any other album on this list will manage. It’s a landmark and it’s a masterpiece. Once in a lifetime stuff, right here. Hip hop history. And we should all feel honoured to have seen it happen.

**“This is an important--a very important--piece of work that will stand the test of time. It’s also an utter blast to listen to and live with.”**

**— Drowned In Sound**

# BEYONCÉ

# 7

**BEYONCE**  
**BEYONCE**

## End of Year Lists

*#1 Billboard | #1 Pretty Much Amazing | #1 Vibe | #11 Gigwise  
#18 Consequence of Sound | #40 Tiny Mix Tapes | #1 Juice Nothing  
(retrospective)*

**13 December 2013**  
**Contemporary R&B Pop**  
**Produced by Beyoncé**  
**Label: Parkwood | Columbia**  
**66:35**

*Pretending that I understand whatsoever, I imagine once you reach Beyoncé levels of established artisanship, you grow tired of living as a radio hit machine. The system grows tiresome and you find greater comfort in retreating into your shadows, reevaluating your craft, rediscovering those reflections that the media stole, and exploring your personal insecurities until you can use them to reinforce an inner strength, ultimately unleashing a power so forceful that it flattens the entire musical plane as we know it. And she was determined to make this one to*

*remember, from the unconventional business model (no promotion) to the extensive imagination (each song came with a short film) and all the feminism, parental vulnerabilities, and sexual freedom spread openly between. Considering a decade where R&B finally found its mightiest creative space, this album did not wear the crown. It was the crown, fittingly carried by the Queen herself. And that's what we're dealing with here. The strongest chess piece. The ruler of the landscape. The best album of the decade. Did she stutter? Bow down, bitches.*

***“The songs are alert to the current sound of clubs and radio, but not trapped by it; the refrains are terse and direct, but what happens between them isn’t formulaic. And while Beyoncé constructed the songs with a phalanx of collaborators, they all know better than to eclipse her creamy, soulful voice.”***

**— The New York Times**



# ***WITH APOLOGIES TO THE FOLLOWING RECORDS***

*When Saints Go Machine - Konkylie (2011)*

*Jamie Woon - Mirrorwriting (2011)*

*Max Richter - Recomposed by Max Richter: Vivaldi - The Four  
Seasons (2012)*

*Nails - Abandon All Life (2013)*

*Oh Land - Earth Sick (2014)*

*Janet Jackson - Unbreakable (2015)*

*Zeal and Ardor - Stranger Fruit (2018)*

*Jorja Smith - Lost & Found (2018)*

*Great Grandpa - Four of Arrows (2019)*

*Durand Jones & The Indications - American Love Call (2019)*

***You guys were so close that I shed tears  
and lost sleep because of it.***

# JUICE NOTHING TOP 50S

2010

50. Bot'Ox - Babylon By Car
49. Marnie Stern - Marnie Stern
48. OK Go - Of The Blue Colour of the Sky
47. Eminem - Recovery
46. The Dead Weather - Sea Of Cowards
45. Crystal Fighters - Star of Love
44. Big Boi - Sir Lucious Left Foot: The Son of Chico Dusty
43. Tame Impala - InnerSpeaker
42. The Budos Band - The Budos Band III
41. Vampire Weekend - Contra
40. Ratatat - LP4
39. Trashtalk - Eyes & Nines
38. Oceansize - Self Preserved While The Bodies Float Up
37. Kylesa - Spiral Shadow
36. Twin Shadow - Forget
35. Yeasayer - ODD BLOOD
34. Mike Patton - Mondo Cane
33. Laurie Anderson - Homeland
32. The Roots - How I Got Over
31. Titus Andronicus - The Monitor
30. Flying Lotus - Cosmogramma
29. M.I.A. - \/\ \ \ Y \
28. Killing Joke - Absolute Dissent
27. LCD Soundsystem - This is Happening
26. Klaxons - Surfing The Void
25. Kanye West - My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy
24. Rolo Tomassi - Cosmology
23. The Black Keys - Brothers
22. Grinderman - Grinderman 2
21. Kno - Death is Silent
20. Beach House - Teen Dream
19. Crystal Castles - Crystal Castles (II)
18. Noisia - Split The Atom
17. Sia - We Are Born
16. The Drums - The Drums
15. Joanna Newsom - Have One On Me
14. Spoon - Transference
13. Liars - Sisterworld
12. Gorillaz - Plastic Beach
11. MGMT - Congratulations
10. Deftones - Diamond Eyes
09. Arcade Fire - The Suburbs
08. Uchi Toki - Cuore Amore Errore Disintegrazione
07. Sufjan Stevens - The Age of Adz
06. The National - High Violet
05. Anais Mitchell - Hometown
04. Die Antwoord - SOS
03. Sleigh Bells - Treats
02. Deerhunter - Halcyon Digest
01. Janelle Monae - The ArchAndroid

2011

50. Nicolas Jaar - Space Is Only Noise
49. Graveyard - Hisingen Blues
48. Septic Flesh - The Great Mass
47. Cage The Elephant - Thank You, Happy Birthday
46. The Psychic Paramount - II
45. Beastie Boys - Hot Sauce Committee, Pt 2
44. Giles Corey - Giles Corey
43. Gil Scott-Heron & Jamie xx - We're New Here
42. The Joy Formidable - The Big Roar
41. Raphael Saadiq - Stone Rollin'
40. Snowman - Δbsence
39. Frank Turner - England Keep My Bones
38. Tennis - Cape Dory
37. Oh Land - Oh Land
36. The Roots - undun
35. Foster The People - Torches
34. The Dø - Both Ways Open Jaws
33. Adele - 21
32. Chelsea Wolfe - Apokalypsis
31. Dumbo Gets Mad - Elephants at the Door
30. EMA - Past Life Martyred Saints
29. REKS - Rhythmic Eternal King Supreme
28. Anna Calvi - Anna Calvi
27. Frank Ocean - Nostalgia, Ultra.
26. Washed Out - Within and Without
25. Astronautalis - This Is Our Science
24. When Saints Go Machine - Konkylie
23. Modeselektor - Monkeytown
22. Cults - Cults
21. Black Keys - El Camino
20. Defeater - Empty Days & Sleepless Nights
19. Kanye West & Jay-Z - Watch The Throne
18. Bjork - Biophilia
17. Braids - Native Speaker
16. Fink - Perfect Darkness
15. Gang Gang Dance - Eye Contact
14. tUnE-yArDs - w h o k i l l
13. Matana Roberts - COIN COIN Chapter One
12. The Weeknd - House Of Balloons
11. Jamie Woon - Mirrorwriting
10. St Vincent - Strange Mercy
09. La Dispute - Wildlife
08. Tom Waits - Bad As Me
07. Bon Iver - Bon Iver, Bon Iver
06. Mastodon - The Hunter
05. Jessica Lea Mayfield - Tell Me
04. The Caretaker - An Empty Bliss Beyond This World
03. PJ Harvey - Let England Shake
02. Little Dragon - Ritual Union
01. James Blake - James Blake

# JUICE NOTHING TOP 50S

2012

50. Loma Prieta - I.V.
49. Soap&Skin - Narrow
48. billy woods - History Will Absolve Me
47. Killing Joke - MMXII
46. Jessie Ware - Devotion
45. Sleigh Bells - Reign Of Terror
44. Lee Fields & The Expressions - Faithful Man
43. MeWithoutYou - Ten Stories
42. Bob Dylan - Tempest
41. THEESatisfaction - awE naturalE
40. Die Antwoord - TenSion
39. Lana Del Rey - Born To Die
38. Caravan Palace - Panic
37. Metz - Metz
36. Jack White - Blunderbuss
35. Devin Townsend Project - Epicloud
34. Swans - The Seer
33. Max Richter - Vivaldi - The Four Seasons
32. Alcest - Les Voyages de L'âme
31. Japandroids - Celebration Rock
30. Gajira - L'enfant Sauvage
29. Aesop Rock - Skelethon
28. Godspeed You! Black Emperor - 'Allelujah! Don't Bend!
27. David Byrne & St. Vincent - Love This Giant
26. Purity Ring - Shriens
25. Between the Buried and Me - The Parallax II
24. Santigold - Masters of My Make-Believe
23. Crystal Castles - (III)
22. Bat for Lashes - The Haunted Man
21. Andy Stott - Luxury Problems
20. Dead Can Dance - Anastasis
19. Dark Time Sunshine - ANX
18. Meshuggah - Koloss
17. Plan B - ill Manors
16. Deftones - Koi No Yokan
15. The Caretaker - Patience (After Sebald)
14. Deerhoof - Breakup Songs
13. Tame Impala - Lonerism
12. Daughn Gibson - All Hell
11. Polica - Give You The Ghost
10. Animal Collective - Centipede Hz
09. iamamiwhoami - kin
08. alt-J - An Awesome Wave
07. Susanne Sundfør - The Silicone Veil
06. Death Grips - The Money Store
05. Pepe Deluxé - Queen Of The Wave
04. Fiona Apple - The Idrler Wheel...
03. Frank Ocean - Channel Orange
02. Grimes - Visions
01. Kendrick Lamar - good kid, m.A.A.d. city

2013

50. Rudimental - Home
49. Modern Life Is War - Fever Hunting
48. Pusha T - My Name Is My Name
47. Fuck Buttons - Slow Focus
46. Nails - Abandon All Life
45. Gris - À l'âme enflammée, l'âme constellée...
44. Charli XCX - True Romance
43. Darkside - Psychic
42. Blood Orange - Cupid Deluxe
41. Alter Bridge - Fortress
40. My Bloody Valentine - MBV
39. Future Of The Left - How to Stop Your Brain...
38. Patty Griffin - Silver Bell
37. AlunaGeorge - Body Music
36. Daft Punk - Random Access Memories
35. Ulver w/ Tromsø Chamber Orchestra - Messe I.X-VI.X
34. Justin Timberlake - The 20/20 Experience
33. Arcade Fire - Reflektor
32. Chance The Rapper - Acid Rap
31. David Bowie - The Next Day
30. Sigur Rós - Kveikur
29. Leprous - Coal
28. Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds - Push the Sky Away
27. Clipping - Midcity
26. The Knife - Shaking the Habitual
25. The National - Trouble Will Find Me
24. Chelsea Light Moving - Chelsea Light Moving
23. M.I.A. - Matangi
22. Disclosure - Settle
21. Vampire Weekend - Modern Vampires of the City
20. The Ocean - Pelagial
19. Julia Holter - Loud City Song
18. Run the Jewels - Run the Jewels
17. Ovid's Withering - Scryers of the Ibis
16. Earl Sweatshirt - Doris
15. Neko Case - The Worse Things Get...
14. Jason Isbell - Southeastern
13. Ling Tosite Sigure - i'imperfect
12. Juana Molina - Wed 21
11. Laura Mvula - Sing To The Moon
10. Jon Hopkins - Immunity
09. James Blake - Overgrown
08. Kacey Musgraves - Same Trailer Different Park
07. Altar of Plagues - Teethed Glory and Injury
06. Wardruna - Yggdrasil
05. Jai Paul - Jai Paul
04. Kyary Pamyu Pamyu - Nanda Collection
03. The Drones - I See Seaweed
02. King Krule - 6 Feet Beneath the Moon
01. Kanye West - Yeezus/Beyoncé - Beyoncé [RETRO]



# JUICE NOTHING TOP 50S

2014

50. Thantifaxath - Sacred White Noise
49. Busdriver - Perfect Hair
48. Hundred Waters - The Moon Rang Like a Bell
47. Damon Albarn - Everyday Robots
46. Nux Vomica - Nux Vomica
45. Beck - Morning Phase
44. Owen Pallett - In Conflict
43. Big Ups - Eighteen Hours of Static
42. Phantogram - Voices
41. Caribou - Our Love
40. Sun Kil Moon - Benji
39. Saor - Aura
38. Cymbals Eat Guitars - LOSE
37. Kyary Pamyu Pamyu - Pika Pika Fantajin
36. Trust - Joyland
35. Kate Tempest - Everybody Down
34. Andy Stott - Faith in Strangers
33. GoGo Penguin - v2.0
32. SOHN - Tremors
31. Darkspace - Dark Space III I
30. Jungle - Jungle
29. Clark - Clark
28. Miranda Lambert - Platinum
27. Oh Land - Earth Sick
26. Cheveu - BUM
25. Todd Terje - It's Album Time
24. Azealia Banks - Broke With Expensive Taste
23. BABYMETAL - BABYMETAL
22. Sólstafr - Ótta
21. The Hotelier - Home Like No Place Is There
20. Pharmakon - Bestial Burden
19. Gerard Way - Hesitant Alien
18. Gazpacho - Demon
17. St. Vincent - St. Vincent
16. Septicflesh - Titan
15. La Roux - Trouble in Paradise
14. Casualties of Cool - Casualties of Cool
13. Sia - 1000 Forms of Fear
12. La Dispute - Rooms of the House
11. FKA twigs - LP1
10. Run the Jewels - Run the Jewels 2
09. Mastodon - Once More 'Round the Sun
08. Perfume Genius - Too Bright
07. Lana Del Rey - Ultraviolence
06. Trophy Scars - Holy Vacants
05. Arca - Xen
04. Iceage - Plowing Into the Field of Love
03. Aphex Twin - Syro
02. Behemoth - The Satanist 01. Swans - To Be Kind
01. Swans - To Be Kind

2015

50. Jaga Jazzist - Starfire
49. Wilderun - Sleep at the Edge of the Earth
48. Ash Koosha - Guud
47. Ibeyi - Ibeyi
46. Carly Rae Jepsen - E-MO-TION
45. Leviathan - Scar Sighted
44. Alabama Shakes - Sound & Color
43. B.C. Camplight - How to Die in the North
42. Marika Hackman - We Slept at Last
41. Marilyn Manson - The Pale Emperor
40. Hop Along - Painted Shut
39. Sun Kil Moon - Universal Themes
38. Lupe Fiasco - Tetsuo & Youth
37. Father John Misty - I Love You, Honeybear
36. ESKA - ESKA
35. Pyramids - A Northern Meadow
34. Jessica Pratt - On Your Own Love Again
33. Periphery - Juggernaut (Alpha and Omega)
32. Vennart - The Demon Joke
31. Horrendous - Anareta
30. Protomartyr - The Agent Intellect
29. Holly Herndon - Platform
28. Janet Jackson - Unbreakable
27. Alva Noto - Xerrox Vol.3
26. Lil Ugly Mane - Third Side of Tape
25. Blanck Mass - Dumb Flesh
24. Pile - You're Better Than This
23. Death Grips - Fashion Week
22. Panopticon - Autumn Eternal
21. Wolf Alice - My Love Is Cool
20. Kamasi Washington - The Epic
19. Cattle Decapitation - The Anthropocene Extinction
18. Vince Staples - Summertime '06
17. Julia Holter - Have You in My Wilderness
16. Colin Stetson & Sarah Neufeld - Never Were...
15. Chelsea Wolfe - Abyss
14. Grimes - Art Angels
13. Benjamin Clementine - At Least for Now
12. Jenny Hval - Apocalypse, Girl
11. Courtney Barnett - Sometimes I Sit and Think...
10. Ought - Sun Coming Down
09. Jamie xx - In Colour
08. Mgła - Exercises in Futility
07. Viet Cong - Viet Cong
06. Deafheaven - New Bermuda
05. Sufjan Stevens - Carrie & Lowell
04. Natalia Lafourcade - Hasta La Raíz
03. Joanna Newsom - Divers
02. Björk - Vulnicura
01. Kendrick Lamar - To Pimp a Butterfly

# JUICE NOTHING TOP 50S

2016

50. Emma Pollock - In Search of Harperfield
49. Chth'e'ilist - Le Dernier Crépuscule
48. Brandy Clark - Big Day in a Small Town
47. Ariana Grande - Dangerous Woman
46. The Body - No One Deserves Happiness
45. Aesop Rock - The Impossible Kid
44. Mitski - Puberty 2
43. Deakin - Sleep Cycle
42. Wormrot - Voices
41. Bat for Lashes - The Bride
40. Michael Kiwanuka - Love & Hate
39. Christine and the Queens - Chaleur humaine
38. Oathbreaker - Rheia
37. The Drones - Feelin Kinda Free
36. Solange - A Seat at the Table
35. Gojira - Magma
34. Triángulo de Amor Bizarro - Salve Discordia
33. Danny Brown - Atrocity Exhibition
32. Cymbals Eat Guitars - Pretty Years
31. The Range - Potential
30. Death Grips - Bottomless Pit
29. The Dear Hunter - Act V: Hymns With the Devil...
28. Jamila Woods - HEAVN
27. The Hotelier - Goodness
26. Esperanza Spalding - Emily's D+Evolution
25. Slice the Cake - Odyssey to the West
24. King - We Are KING
23. James Blake - The Colour in Anything
22. Deftones - Gore
21. Paul Jebanasam - Continuum
20. Denzel Curry - Imperial
19. Beyoncé - Lemonade
18. Nicolas Jaar - Sirens
17. Sunset Network 91 - Strangers Once Lovers
16. Anderson .Paak - Malibu
15. Lemon Demon - Spirit Phone
14. Vektor - Terminal Redux
13. Bon Iver - 22, A Million
12. Cult of Luna & Julie Christmas - Mariner
11. Kate Tempest - Let Them Eat Chaos
10. Sarah Neufeld - The Ridge
09. Agnes Obel - Citizen of Glass
08. Roly Porter - Third Law
07. Leonard Cohen - You Want It Darker
06. Tanya Tagaq - Retribution
05. A Tribe Called Quest - "We Got It From Here..."
04. Frank Ocean - Blonde
03. Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds - Skeleton Tree
02. Radiohead - A Moon Shaped Pool
01. David Bowie - Blackstar

2017

50. Brockhampton - SATURATION II
49. Pissed Jeans - Why Love Now
48. Mark Templeton - Gentle Heart
47. All Them Witches - Sleeping Through the War
46. The Big Moon - Love in the 4th Dimension
45. Full of Hell - Trumpeting Ecstasy
44. Nelly Furtado - The Ride
43. Alexandra Savior - Belladonna of Sadness
42. Hundred Waters - Communicating
41. Code Orange - Forever
40. SZA - CTRL
39. Manchester Orchestra - A Black Mile to the Surface
38. Igloohost - Neo Wax Bloom
37. Stabscotch - Uncanny Valley
36. Der Weg einer Freiheit - Finisterre
35. Residente - Residente
34. Chino Amobi - PARADISO
33. Exquirla - Para quienes aún viven
32. Mensvreters - Die Gevaarlijkste Bende
31. Oxbow - Thin Black Duke
30. Vince Staples - Big Fish Theory
29. Algiers - The Underside of Power
28. Primitive Man - Caustic
27. Gas - Narkopop
26. Converge - The Dusk in Us
25. Max Richter - Three Worlds: Music From Woolf Works
24. The Smith Street Band - More Scared of You...
23. Ex Eye - Ex Eye
22. Chloe x Halle - The Two of Us
21. Hauschka - What If
20. Glassjaw - Material Control
19. White Reaper - The World's Best American Band
18. Myrkur - Mareridt
17. Feist - Pleasure
16. PWR BTTM - Pageant
15. Cigarettes After Sex - Cigarettes After Sex
14. Jesca Hoop - Memories Are Now
13. Photay - Onism
12. Brand New - Science Fiction
11. Chelsea Wolfe - Hiss Spun
10. Xiu Xiu - Forget
09. Charlotte Gainsbourg - Rest
08. Priests - Nothing Feels Natural
07. Mount Eerie - A Crow Looked at Me
06. Neil Cicierega - Mouth Moods
05. Blanck Mass - World Eater
04. Pumarosa - The Witch
03. Lorde - Melodrama
02. Benjamin Clementine - I Tell a Fly
01. Julien Baker - Turn Out the Lights

# JUICE NOTHING TOP 50S

2018

50. Caroline Rose - Loner
49. Clarence Clarity - Think: Peace
48. Kimbra - Primal Heart
47. Lupe Fiasco - Drogas Wave
46. Yamantaka // Sonic Titan - Dirt
45. Ought - Room Inside the World
44. Ariana Grande - Sweetener
43. Conjurer - Mire
42. Amnesia Scanner - Another Life
41. Lily Allen - No Shame
40. The Caretaker - Everywhere at the End of Time Stage 4
39. Mitski - Be the Cowboy
38. Marie Davidson - Working Class Woman
37. Teyana Taylor - K.T.S.E.
36. Tribulation - Down Below
35. MGMT - Little Dark Age
34. Machine Girl - The Ugly Art
33. Imperial Triumphant - Vile Luxury
32. Princess Chelsea - The Loneliest Girl
31. Black Dresses - WASTEISOLATION
30. Denzel Curry - Ta13oo
29. møl - Jord
28. serpentwithfeet - soil
27. Pusha T - Daytona
26. . . . . . - []
25. Camila Cabello - Camila
24. Earl Sweatshirt - Some Rap Songs
23. Zeal and Ardor - Stranger Fruit
22. Jorja Smith - Lost & Found
21. Jon Hopkins - Singularity
20. Tropical Fuck Storm - A Laughing Death in Meatspace
19. Deafheaven - Ordinary Corrupt Human Love
18. Neko Case - Hell-On
17. A.A.L. (Against All Logic) - 2012 - 2017
16. Funeral Mist - Hekatomb
15. Marianne Faithfull - Negative Capability
14. Robyn - Honey
13. SOPHIE - Oil of Every Pearl's Un-Insides
12. Félix Blume - Death in Haiti
11. Turnstile - Time & Space
10. Nils Frahm - All Melody
09. Rosalía - El Mal Querer
08. Rolo Tomassi - Time Will Die and Love Will Bury It
07. Idles - Joy as an Act of Resistance.
06. Rival Consoles - Persona
05. Low - Double Negative
04. Iceage - Beyondless
03. Kacey Musgraves - Golden Hour
02. Kathryn Joseph - From When I Wake the Want Is
01. Daughters - You Won't Get What You Want

2019

50. Boy Harsher - Careful
49. Matmos - Plastic Anniversary
48. Caroline Polachek - Pang
47. Ian Noe - Between the Country
46. Blood Incantation - Hidden History of the Human Race
45. Kai Whiston - No World As Good As Mine
44. Shin Guard - 2020
43. Sampa the Great - The Return
42. Ariana Grande - Thank U, Next
41. Richard Dawson - 2020
40. Beth Gibbons - Symphony No. 3...
39. Slowthai - Nothing Great About Britain
38. Glass Beach - The First Glass Beach Album
37. Black to Comm - Seven Horses for Seven Kings
36. Denzel Curry - ZUU
35. Great Grandpa - Four of Arrows
34. The Caretaker - Everywhere at the End of Time 6
33. Chelsea Wolfe - Birth of Violence
32. Clipping - There Existed an Addiction to Blood
31. Carly Rae Jepsen - Dedicated
30. Swans - Leaving Meaning.
29. Leprous - Pitfalls
28. Durand Jones & The Indications - American Love Call
27. Girl Band - The Talkies
26. Kim Petras - Turn Off the Light
25. Car Bomb - Mordial
24. Black Dresses - Thank You
23. Lukas Rickli/Jakob Ullmann - Fremde Zeit Addendum 5
22. Jenny Hval - The Practice of Love
21. Bent Knee - You Know What They Mean
20. Kelsey Lu - Blood
19. K A R Y Y N - The Quanta Series
18. Billy Woods & Kenny Segal - Hiding Places
17. Fire! Orchestra - Arrival
16. Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds - Ghosteen
15. Kim Gordon - No Home Record
14. La Dispute - Panorama
13. 3776 - Saijiki
12. Kate Tempest - The Book of Traps and Lessons
11. FKA twigs - Magdalene
10. Jesca Hoop - Stonechild
09. Hannah Diamond - Reflections
08. Xiu Xiu - Girl With Basket of Fruit
07. Billie Eilish - When We All Fall Asleep,...
06. Angel Olsen - All Mirrors
05. Michael Kiwanuka - Kiwanuka
04. Lana Del Rey - Norman Fucking Rockwell!
03. Black Midi - Schlagenheim
02. Lingua Ignota - Caligula
01. Weyes Blood - Titanic Rising



## ***WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT THE AUTHOR***

Launching his blog **Juice Nothing** in 2010, **Jared Woods** has since collected over a million views on that baby which is pathetic considering. Rather, he's far prouder of the millions upon millions of viewers who enjoy his scripts coming to life every day via the **Pencilmation** YouTube channel. His other notable works include posting daily one-panel comics called **#legobiscuits** to his Instagram, performing vocals for **Sectlinefor/Coming Down Happy**, and producing/directing/starring in the **Definitely Not a Cry For Help** film/web series/travel blog. His first book, **This is Your Brain on Drugs**, is a fictional novel published from **The Goat's Nest**.

Follow him on Insta/Twitter/Facebook/Whatever **@LegoTrip**  
Fuck him now to avoid the rush.





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Reviews written by Jared Woods

# **THIS IS THE OFFICIAL BEST OF THE DECADE LIST EVERY OTHER LIST IS FAKE AND WRONG**

After listening to well over 4,000 albums from 2010 until 2019 and compiling a top 50 for each year, Jared Woods has become *the* educated voice that you can trust.

Go ahead and read his book. Study his words. Steal his best suggestions. And, before you know it, you too can sound like a high authority on this decade of music.

Your friends will be so impressed.

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