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Angela H. Brown: sales@slugmag.com
SLUG HQ: 801.487.9221
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Mason Rodrickc
Graphic Designer



Mason Rodrickc is a one-two combo—his designs have been knocking SLUG readers out since the summer of 2012. Rodrickc's design work is clean and superb—see it for yourself in our interviews with **Jon Mikl Thor** (pg. 8) and *Squarewave Sound* owner **Philip Zinn** (pg. 22). Taking inspiration from cartoonists **Chris Ware** and **Winsor McCay**, Rodrickc's illustrative flair—seen in 2014's *Beer Issue* and his SLUG "Holiday Comix" in Aug. '14—has given emotive depth to his design eye candy (check them out on Insta': @bearcat42). You might spot Rodrickc working on SLUG and other commissioned projects while sipping coffee at *Nostalgia* or *Publik Coffee Roasters*, headphones on and ears tuned to anything from indie-infused hip-hop to dark and ambient electronic to *Radiotopia* podcasts. We're happy to call Rodrickc one of ours!

ABOUT THE COVER: SLC expatriate **Kenny Riches'** film *The Strongest Man* was accepted into the *Sundance Film Festival*. **Chris Bodily** deftly illustrated its main character, Beef. Read about the film on page 38, and check out more of Bodily's art at *hatrobot.com*!

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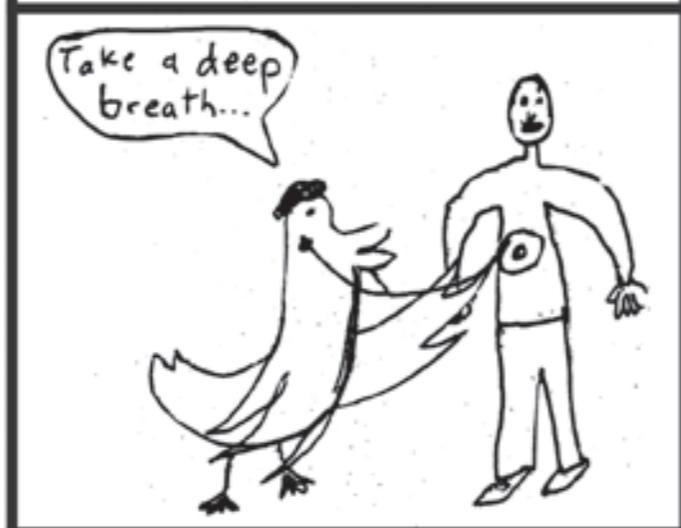


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Olga Albizu, *Radiante*, 1967, oil, Smithsonian American Art Museum. Gift of JPMorgan Chase.

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I AM THOR KING OF MUSCLE ROCK

By Henry Glasheen
henryglasheen@msn.com

Mention **Jon Mikl Thor** in the right circle of people, and you'll know right away what makes the man a legend. His band, **Thor**, never achieved the same heights of commercial success reached by their contemporaries. They're not booking sold-out shows every couple of years to support an endless stream of new releases, coasting on lucrative record deals or living a life of luxury.

However, Thor is bending steel bars in his teeth, still standing as a testament to the resilient spirit of rock n' roll.

That might seem like an oversimplification, but in reality, his live performance is still an unforgettable experience. "I think that if people put down their dollar, they want to see a show," says Thor. "I want them to leave satisfied that they've seen a great show and they've heard some tremendous rock." Performing an array of strong-man feats and changing from costume to costume during his set, Thor built his rock n' roll career on the strength of his charisma and theatrical prowess.

Fifteen years ago—a few years after he started touring again—he encountered a pair of filmmakers who began following his life and daily struggles, creating the *Slamdance* documentary that would become *I Am Thor*. "Ryan Wise and Alan Higbee saw me play in Seattle," he says, chuckling to himself. "That's right, this is an epic 15 years in the making." He still hasn't seen the film, which will be premiering at this year's *Slamdance* film festival, but he knows that it won't be pulling any punches. "You don't know what's going to happen when you do a documentary," Thor says. "They followed me more and more through the ups and the

downs—and believe me, there were plenty of downs, mishaps and crazy things. Some of the stuff, I don't even believe." However, he's planning to travel down to Utah this month to see the film for the first time.

Though his interest in performing live rock music was galvanized in the early '60s by the British Invasion, he first decided that he wanted to perform when he encountered science fiction. "Growing up in the '50s, I was always into *The Adventures of Superman* with **George Reeves** on television, and movies like *Invaders From Mars*," he says. "I had always wanted to put together some kind of theatrical event—didn't know quite what it was—that would display all these elements that I enjoyed and I felt other people would enjoy."

The world of rock began to change in the early '70s, when bands like **KISS** and **Alice Cooper** began amping up the theater of their performances. Technology like laser-lights and pyrotechnics started becoming a regular facet of the rock scene, making live shows bigger and crazier than ever before. Thor finally saw an opportunity to make his childhood dream a reality. "I could just go wild with my theatrics," he says. "I drew all kinds of ideas and concepts on my drawing board—like becoming this superhero character and science-fiction character, fighting monsters and doing strength feats."

It's one thing to pull off an illusion or a trick onstage, but Thor's feats were the real deal. He'd spent much of his youth competing in body-building competitions, and by the time he became the Legendary Rock Warrior, he was already the first Canadian ever to win both the title of Mr. Canada and Mr. USA. He even learned some secrets from the great body-builders of his time. "**Doug Hepburn** was, at one time in the '50s, the strongest man in the world. He lived in Vancouver, and I used to get secrets from him," he says. "He could actually bend a dime in two with his fingers. I could never quite perfect that one."

For more than a decade, Thor was at the top of his game. His live show dazzled audiences in the US and Europe. Nobody else was pulling the kind of stunts he would attempt live and, at the time, he seemed like a shoo-in for permanent rock star status. However, a series of incompetent management decisions ended up stunting his career, preventing him from ever achieving the star status he craved. "I pretty much got out of the business," says Thor. "I tried a new life. I built a house down in Charlotte, North Carolina."

After about 10 years of obscurity, Thor decided to get back on the touring circuit. It wasn't an easy decision, either. His physician said that his live stunts could potentially kill him, and his wife left him when she realized he wouldn't be dissuaded. The touring life was rough, and his shows weren't bringing in tons of fans. Through countless lineup changes and setbacks, Thor still maintained an impregnable sense of optimism about the future.



Photo: Blue Lame 61 Productions

Just how strong is Jon Mikl Thor? See *I Am Thor* at *Slamdance* to find out.

For someone who has seen the absolute best and worst of what the world of music has to offer, Thor still believes in the dream. "Heavy metal is something that transcends time," he says. "It lives forever, generation to generation. [Fans] appreciate the elders. I'm one of the guys that keeps on going, keeps on kicking." For now, Thor plans to release a new album in 2015, featuring a list of high-profile rockers, including **Henry Rollins**, **Jay Jay French** and **Richie Stotts**. "Life's exciting, man," says Thor, audibly smiling through his words. "I'm doing what I want to do. If you can find something you can enjoy doing, that makes life wonderful."

Screenings:

Premiere – Sunday, Jan. 25, 10:20 a.m.
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MERCHANT ROYAL

(L-R) Ryan Arnold (guitar), Christina Manteris (vocals), Kevin Schultz (bass) and Jake Gloschat (drums, percussion)



Photo: Russel Daniels

LOCALIZED

By Ischa B. • ischa3@gmail.com

January's *Localized* starts our new year off with the classic rock lineup of Merchant Royal and **Big Wild Wings**, two of our fair town's lovely femme-fronted projects. The evening gets an extra dash of feminine mystique with **Night Wings** opening the night, and the whole local-loving event is sponsored by **Uinta Brewing Co.**, **KRCL 90.9FM** and **Spilt Ink SLC**. Head on down to the *Urban Lounge* and enjoy it all for only \$5. Doors open at 9 p.m.

When the members of Merchant Royal set off on their musical voyage together, they chose a name to suit their ambitions. Bassist **Kevin Schultz** stumbled across the story of their namesake ship while perusing the "On this Day" section of Wikipedia's main page. Laden with nearly one billion dollars' worth of gold, the original Merchant Royal, a 17th Century merchant vessel, sank on Sept. 24, 1641, and has never been confirmed as recovered. "It had all the makings for something cool," Schultz says of the story behind the name. Luckily for us, the band Merchant Royal is laden with great tunes, and there's no stormy weather in sight. This bluesy four-piece has been delivering the goods all over SLC, and this past August, to the delight of the many fans of their live show, they released their first EP.

It hasn't always been smooth sailing for the group, who has added and changed some members since the original lineup. These days, though, they seem to have a healthy chemistry worked out regarding everything from songwriting to booking shows. They each bring their own set of skills and experiences to the table. Singer **Christina Manteris** has been singing and songwriting for years, and as the face of the band, she reaches out to venues and other bands to get many of the bookings for Merchant Royal. Guitarist **Ryan Arnold** works with Manteris to create the melodies and chords behind the vintage-inspired material, while Schultz uses his formal education in music (he studies at the *University of Utah*) to help refine and guide the tunes with his sumptuous bass lines. Drummer **Jake Gloschat** provides the backbone for the project with his consistent and considerate beats. He is a decidedly polite drummer, matching his intensity to the music rather than asking that the music match him, a highly desirable quality for a percussionist in a band where melody and voice carry the project.

Manteris' voice really does shine in this style of music, which is as much to her credit as it is to the three musicians creating the material and highlights her smooth and soulful vocals. Sometimes band members can get carried away thinking about their own role and focus on how to come out on top in the mix. Merchant Royal members seem to have an agreement about how the band should sound as a whole, and their cohesive live performances show off their talents as a group. Inspired by classic greats such as **The Doors**, **Pink Floyd**, **Jimi Hendrix** and **Eric Clapton**, the tunes are a beautiful match for Manteris' voice. "Vocally I'm influenced by **Patsy Cline** a lot ... That's what I listened to growing up, and my mom always sang [her] in the shower," she says. "Ever since I was little ... I wanted to sing like Patsy Cline ... soulful, sad," says Manteris. The foursome ab-

solutely achieve the soulful, vintage sounds of the classic era of rock they aspire to.

The group reinterprets many of their classic favorites as covers. The real excitement for any band, though, is creating new material. With at least 20 Merchant Royal originals on the roster, a new EP out since August, and new material always in the works, these guys mean serious business when it comes to putting in the work. They put no rules on their songwriting, with each member welcome to bring in lyrics, riffs or even beats to get the process going. With so much talent among the four of them, the potential for excessive egos could hinder the process, but with such good heads on their shoulders, they use their skills for good instead of evil and put it all on the table, musically speaking.

Next on the agenda is taking over the world, of course, as it is for many ambitious musicians. Though expensive and often uncomfortable, touring still seems to be a necessity in the otherwise ever-changing landscape of the music industry, and Merchant Royal does not shy away from the prospect. Schultz just got back from touring in October with his friend **Charles Ellsworth**, and traveling 4,000 miles in eight days gave him a taste for life on the road. With a couple of members finishing up school and other obligations in the next year, the horizon will be wide open and calling their names. "Eventually, all 50 states would be great," Schultz suggests and Arnold adds, "It'd be nice to tour the world ... Why stop at the 50 states?"

With plenty of local shows under their belt and visions of regional, national and international expansion dancing in their heads, Merchant Royal certainly have a bright future. When I ask what they'd like the world to know about them, Gloschat replies enthusiastically, "We love them!"

With their talent, drive and enthusiasm, there's no doubt that the world will love them, too. Come down to the show on Jan. 9 and sail away with your very own Merchant Royal disc, or check them out at merchantroualband.com.

BIG WILD WINGS

Sometimes in life, when we're lucky, magical meetings just sort of happen, and beautiful things take flight on their own. Big Wild Wings was born of just such circumstances—in the spring of 2012, when singer/bassist (and sometimes guitar box player) **Lyndsi Austin**, drummer **Chris Soper** and keyboardist **Tyler Hummel** made good on some casual chat to get together and jam. One jam turned into another, and then, "Holy hell, we wrote some songs together. Who would've thought?" Hummel says. Surprised and motivated by their early songwriting success, they quickly put their act to stage. Soper says, "Next thing we knew, we had a show before we had a band name. We had to make some fast moves."

The chemistry among the three members is evident, even just in the setting of our interview. "I think it helps that we get along with each other really well," Hummel says. They've put that camaraderie to good use, joining forces to create one of the most anticipated and celebrated local releases of the year. Their debut album, *Speaking in Cursive*, features 10 tunes that are a culmination of dozens of shows' worth of experience and crowd response.

"We were able to make it a cohesive collection of songs," Austin says. The trio used their experiences playing live shows to help whittle down the selection they chose to record. "It used to be a bit of a dartboard," Soper says of their songwriting in the past. However, after spending the last two years refining their performances and style, they feel more confident than ever and ready to face

the next steps as a band. Austin spends time ensuring that the new album is getting the attention it deserves via social media, bookings and beyond. After all the work to get to this point, she's not going to let it just disappear quietly into the night. "Let's not let this good, cool thing we've created die down," she says. The work she does is paying off with gigs opening for touring bands at great spots like Urban Lounge. Soper says, "People have been super supportive." Naturally, playing more shows and touring to promote the new album are major parts of the agenda for the near future.

The band found it difficult to justify touring before, without a new recording to promote. "That was our biggest flaw performing over the last year and a half—we couldn't give them anything," Hummel says. Now, armed with their new release, Big Wild Wings can really spread their wings and fly. "It's hard to go play shows out of town if you don't have a product to leave. Ultimately, that's what you're trying to do. Now that we have our CD, we have a lot of freedom and flexibility to play outside of Utah," Austin says. Their live show and new album are already getting rave reviews locally, so getting their music out into the world is a must-do on their agenda.

Fans have compared them to acts such as **Radiohead**, **The Cranberries**, **Beach House** and even **Phantogram**. "We have kind of an indie sound, but it's almost reminiscent of the '90s in a way," Austin says. They blend a fresh, airy sound with inklings of alternative melodies and beats, and Austin's voice floats over it all like an angsty angel—the combination reminds me of another '90s essential, and one of my personal faves, **Mazzy**

Star. Most intriguing, though, is how they do it all without the obligatory lead guitarist to complete the "traditional" band. "We've definitely talked about bringing other members in, but it's really wonderful and easy to work with three people," Hummel says. Austin agrees: "We have kind of a lot of sound to just fill up with three people, but I think we do an all right job of it," he says. "We're just always on the same page with our writing."

The undeniable creative chemistry between the three will not be slowed, and so more music is always on the horizon. "It's really refreshing to get back into the vibe we had when we started, to be able to write music together," Austin says. After spending many months writing, perfecting, recording and performing the material on *Speaking in Cursive*, the band is ready to stretch their musical muscles once again and begin the journey toward their next release.

In the meantime, you can still catch Big Wild Wings in town before they take flight out into the great beyond and see for yourself what all the buzz is about. They've been opening for sweet touring acts like **mr. Gnome** and **Perfume Genius** at *Urban Lounge*, and now you can catch them there on Jan. 9 for the first *Localized* of the New Year.

If you make it down to the show, you can take flight with your own physical copy of Big Wild Wings' new album, *Speaking in Cursive*. Otherwise, stop by bigwildwings.bandcamp.com to download it.

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(L-R) Chris Soper (drums), Lyndsi Austin (vocals, bass) and Tyler Hummel (keyboards).

Photo: Russel Danfields

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tosh ramen.com



Like a newly sprouting garden, *Tosh's Ramen* isn't much to look at. It sits in the same sad space as a Korean restaurant did last year, in a sad strip mall, on a sad block of title-loan sharks and payday-lending piranhas. Its chairs are a flimsy variety of the ubiquitous plastic lawn chair, and its tables are small.

Yet, people know about it, and many love it. *Tosh's Ramen* is a church to worshippers of a passing time, where secrets are revealed in bowl after steaming bowl of flesh, water and wheat. The keeper of the flavor's secret, **Toshio Sekikawa**, holds his congregation in thrall. Sitting at his tables, they connect with a cosmic circle of Japanese culinary knowledge and a tradition of perfect yet changing flavors. I see them here in numbers, some many days a week, pretty much from the time he opens his humble doors until he



Photos: John Barkiple

The Tokyo Wings and the Tonkotsu Ramen synergize as a hearty meal from Tosh's Ramen.

thanks them on the way out at 3 p.m. and again at 8 p.m. They are here to live, for a few minutes, in the comfort of soup and to note, quietly to themselves, the differences from the time before, and the time before that—and I have to admit that it makes me envious.

I don't really have a feel for ramen, but I hope to, with some work. As my friend, sushi chef **Tony Rivera** at *Takashi*, said, "In the West, we taste oils for flavor, and cooking is designed around oils. In Japan, flavors are set around the things in water, like salt and seaweeds and the umami taste of fish, mushroom and ferment. It's much more subtle." The soul of the soup is in the broth, but the body is in the noodle. The word "ramen" is a Japanese word that derives from the Chinese word "lamian." Unlike the instant, pre-fried kind you settle for at mere quarters a package, this noodle is yellow, coarse and muscular. It burrs my lip a little when I slurp it, and it bites and chews in a satisfying way. It is the constant horizon to the broth's changing sky.

Sekikawa's broths differ subtly, style to style and day to day. Ramen houses take pride in their broth's particulars, and each is a secret, a labor of love. Innovations to the broth and the noodle are, like fashion, quickly adopted. However, ramen evolution from outside Japan is scorned. *Tosh's* are traditional kinds of broth, and his ramen service is old-school. He and his soup are placeholders of a history for which young Japanese yearn, and which the older ones remember and esteem.

The menu at *Tosh's* is appropriately small: six Ramens, a few appetizers and one dessert. The service is provided by hip kids who obviously like the job and do it well. There in the back is Sekikawa. He will probably greet you as you come or go. Mostly, he is at the bowls and hovering near steaming cauldrons. Your food is his by design and often by his hand. The Tonkotsu Ramen (\$8.95) has a hemisphere of boiled egg bobbing by spring onions and three wide slices of fatty, striped pork belly. The broth is butter-colored with rendered fat. Its taste is subtle in distinction but big in character. It's a rich mouthful. The noodles eat al dente and slightly grainy. The Shoyu Ramen

(\$8.95) is lighter in the broth—in color and in mouth feel—but otherwise quite similar in dress and pleasure to the Tonkotsu.

The Karai Ramen (\$9.95) is a bigger soup with a spicy miso base added to the broth. It comes with a mirin-infused mushroom, roughly minced pork and bean sprouts, and bigger body is a little more "fall" in color and warmth. The heavy and more expensive Curry Ramen (\$10.50) has a gravy-minded body, brown with curry and sporting breaded pork cutlets and fat-crunch leafy greens. There is a Vegetarian Ramen (\$8.95) as well, and yam noodles can be had for a vegan diet.

The appetizers are popular—most tables seem to share a few. The Tokyo Wings (\$7.50) are sweet and tender. They come six on an albatross-bill-shaped bowl. The Kushikatsu (\$6.95), skewered medallions of pork fried in panko, are served with a hoisin-based dip, and the Gyoza (\$6.95), are small fists of minced pork and greens in hand-pinched dough. With an acidly bright dip, they are very particular—not your mama's pot stickers.

For drinks, they offer green tea (\$2.50), hot or cold, iced tea (\$1.50), Perrier (\$1.50) and American canned sodas (\$1). For dessert, there is Annin Tofu (\$2.50), which is a fresh apricot cream sweet.

Juzo Itami's very funny foodie movie, *Tampopo* is a good place to look if you want to witness the church of ramen in its original glory. *Tosh's Ramen* is the old-timey church of ramen that moved in just down the street. I think you should go there and get a bowl full of the good news.

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A Meeting of Minds

with Filmmakers **Jerry White Jr. and Jeremy Royce**

By Jordan Deveraux • tomjordan21@gmail.com

Can these punks rekindle their zany mojo? Catch *20 Years of Madness* at Slamdance to find out.



Most of us have made videos of ourselves and our friends doing weird shit. Depending on when you were born, those videos could sit in a dusty box in the basement or float aimlessly and untouched in the cloud. The more ambitious among us produce works of art that go on to lead happy lives on YouTube or Vimeo.

In the '90s, a group of friends in Michigan decided to get serious about film and took to their local public-access studio to capture what were then landmark documents in adolescent hijinks. The show, appropriately called *30 Minutes of Madness*, aired 13 episodes composed of visually and, at times, conceptually cohesive comedy skits. However, it eventually met its end, and took with it the film aspirations of most of the cast.

Fast-forward 20 years. Jerry White Jr., the producer and mastermind of *30 Minutes of Madness*, met fellow filmmaker Jeremy Royce while the two were enrolled in the graduate film program at USC. White familiarized Royce with the show and the history between the *30 Minutes* crew and, upon returning from a brief visit in Michigan, White relayed to Royce that many former cast members were struggling in the day-to-day. "I was struck by the fact that there was this show where these kids acted crazy when they were teenagers, and then a lot of them now were struggling with mental illness, and I was like, 'You have to make a documentary about that,'" Royce says. Thus, *20 Years of Madness* began.

The obvious framework was to document the making of the 15th episode of *30 Minutes of Madness* (the 14th was completed by White and included mostly old footage) with the same key cast mem-

bers. But there were many cast members whom White hadn't spoken with for years. "It ran a gamut of 'totally still in touch with them' and completely estranged," White says. The dramatic arc of the story, for better or worse, lies in the fact that White had a falling-out with key players in the show, which ultimately led to the demise of *30 Minutes* in the first place.

The concept of *20 Years of Madness* is quite meta in that it is a document, in film, about making a TV episode. Royce informed me that this often worked in their favor: Problems that White faced with *30 Minutes* became fodder for the documentary. The documentary also works in tandem with the making of the episode. "I really wanted to tell the story of *30 Minutes of Madness* and all the people on it in a way where the current relationships that they're rekindling echo back to 20 years ago when they first met," Royce says. "I wanted the modern-day story to be a mirror to the story of this group of friends back in the '90s."

The 15th episode takes cues from the early creative processes of *30 Minutes*. The early skits show a methodical randomness that ranges from caffeinated monologues delivered in stream of consciousness, to a gimpish slave being towed by a lady on roller skates. The new skits are equally as whimsical. When I asked Royce and White about the process of making the film, the spirit of improvisation came up with both filmmakers. "It is a way to keep things energetic and inspire yourself, because you have

to live in the moment," White says. "If everything's too perfect on the page, you run the risk of things feeling too scripted, and it won't live."

Looking back to the old episodes, there is a versatility that extends far beyond improvising lines or gestures. The credits show a rotation of roles similar to that of a band where the musicians swap instruments every few songs. This is the case with the 15th episode. White told me that none of the skits that play out in the episode are the product of one single writer—in short, it is as it ever was. "They say, 'You can't go home again,' and I know you can't revisit the past truly," White says, "but I'm telling you, when we hit record and we were going, it really did feel the same."

As it is a documentary about making a TV episode, process has a heavy hand in figuring the theme of the movie. It's no secret that the cast (the people in the documentary) are going through tough times; but there is a therapy that happens for these people when they get back in front of the camera, which seems to have been at least in the back of the filmmakers' minds. "Hopefully, in the process, some of these people can rekindle friendships and possibly some of their artistic aspirations," Royce says.

20 Years of Madness: What is it? Well, it's a film about an old TV show. But it's also about youth, friendship, revisiting the good times of the past and the healing power of creativity.

Screenings:

Premiere – Friday, Jan. 23, 7:40 p.m.
"The Gallery," *Treasure Mountain Inn*, Park City

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 11:30 a.m.
"The Ballroom," *Treasure Mountain Inn*, Park City

ZOLA JESUS

Creativity in Isolation: Nika Roza Danilova

By Allison Shephard • allshepard@gmail.com

It's been two years since Zola Jesus (aka Nika Roza Danilova) blessed SLC with her ethereal voice that caused us to rethink how we view the world around us. *SLUG* recently had the opportunity to sit down with Danilova, who returns to *Urban Lounge* Jan. 12, and to discuss the environment, living in isolation and her new album, *Taiga*.

SLUG: How did you get from where you started to where you are today?
Zola Jesus: I think it's mostly been a process of refining—of first doing the thing that comes. That's the only thing you can do, really, because it's the only music you've ever made, and then you continue to chisel away at it, and refine it, and figure out the path that the music needs to take. I think that over the past five or six years, I've been constantly fine-tuning the whole thing.

SLUG: Would you say that's the reason that you've transitioned from genre to genre?
Zola Jesus: Yeah, but also because I get bored so easily. It's a constant process of throwing yourself into a world that's unfamiliar and finding your way out of it. That's when creativity happens—when you're uncomfortable. It happens when you've got limitations. That's when the greatest music happens. So you need to put yourself in those uncomfortable or new positions in order to yield that.

SLUG: How would you describe your songwriting and composition process?
Zola Jesus: Sometimes there's a routine, just in terms of the workflow. I produce, I write, I play all the instruments, I'm recording it and it's all happening at the same time. So you kind of set up a template. I like to throw that off a little bit because after a while, it becomes a little mundane, and you stop being creative that way. I've really enjoyed just randomly walking around, going on a hike and coming up with music that way. It feels much more organic and natural that way. You catch yourself off guard.

SLUG: I noticed that on this new album, isolation is a main theme. How do you feel about songs being remixed purely for large crowds and clubs in relation to that motif?
Zola Jesus: In the past, I was really closed-minded to that. I didn't like the idea of someone taking a song that I worked really hard on, that's incredibly personal and that I made a certain way for a certain reason, and then just throwing a dance beat under it and putting it in a club. I found that very offensive. But now, I'm thinking about [it] in terms that it frees me up to make the record that I want to make, and the remixes can be functional in different ways. They can make my music appropriate for different situations. My music isn't appropriate for many situations. I feel like it's mostly best to listen to alone—it's not a public or festive kind of music. So the opportunity to have that situation be appropriate for my music is interesting. I couldn't do it myself, but I like to hear people that I admire do it.

SLUG: Would you say it makes your music more accessible?
Zola Jesus: I don't know if it makes it more accessible—I guess, in some ways, it does. I'm open to it right now. I like throwing myself into uncomfortable situations. So whenever I have really strong principles about something, I'll get to a point where I need to question why I have those principles, so I'll test myself, and that's what the remix situation is like. I'm testing the principles that I used to have, and so far, it's been interesting.



Photo: Jeff Elstone

Goth-leaning avant-pop songstress Nika Roza Danilova returns to *Urban Lounge* Jan. 12 as Zola Jesus.

SLUG: I'm really interested in what it was like living on Vashon Island, where you didn't know anyone and didn't have Internet access.
Zola Jesus: It was really interesting. It reminded me of how I grew up, because I grew up in the middle of nowhere in rural Wisconsin. So much of going to that island was returning to my roots, in a way. It was removing myself from society. I was living in Los Angeles at the time, which is the epicenter of society and culture. It's overwhelming as an artist because you get so weighed down by the culture that already exists—it's so hard to figure out where you belong in that story. To remove myself was really healthy ... You're just among the trees and by the water, and it felt very innate and very natural. It felt easy. Life is so much easier when you take the baggage of society away.
SLUG: Will you continue this pattern whenever you go to write a new album?
Zola Jesus: I'll definitely continue that process of removing myself. I think, in the past, writing when you're in the middle of everything becomes clouded. Your creativity becomes clouded by everything else going on in the world. It's important for an artist to comment on culture because that's the point of art, but at the same time, you need to give them something new. In order to do that, you need to take everything that you've sponged up and remove yourself and make sense of it all.

Be sure to check out Zola Jesus' sixth studio release *Taiga*, out now via **Mute Records** and see Danilova perform at *Urban Lounge* Jan. 12.

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SAWTOOTH/SINE/TRIANGLE/SQUARE

Squarewave Sound synth shop

By Timo H. • empty.aviary@gmail.com
Photos: John Barkiple

Squarewave Sound is Salt Lake City's only store dealing primarily in synthesizers and effects pedals. We are lucky to have them—not because they are the single option, but because of an already intriguing selection of instruments and effects and an owner with a great amount of knowledge and enthusiasm: **Philip Zinn** makes one's time spent in the store a memorable and positive experience. My visit to the shop for this interview was my first time being there, and I wanted to play with every machine on the shelf. The shop space is on the smaller side, so there's a nice sense of being surrounded by gear. Records line the tops of the walls, a chalkboard announces incoming equipment, and a glass case houses effects pedals, some by brands unavailable elsewhere in Salt Lake, such as Strymon.

Philip's interest in synths and modulators began when he was playing bass as a teen in a three-piece rock band. He recalls the experience as fun, but there was a definite turning point at the time of Philip's discovery of soft-synths in the early 2000s, when he became excited with the idea of being able to perform music alone. Philip made the next logical step and began collecting hardware. Since the search for new gear never ends, he still is collecting. Naming some favorite machines in the shop, he points out a Vermona drum machine in stock that he uses in his own studio, in addition to a few Moog synths, and he is looking to add a Dave Smith Instruments Pro 2 to his setup.

When asked about the reason for opening a synth shop, Philip says, "I saw a void here in Salt Lake City and wanted to fill

that to help grow the community here. It's a passion of mine, and the people that are interested in it are really interested. It's kind of an addictive thing."

Philip and his wife, **Chaney Zinn**, began planning the shop around June 2014, and had a great turnout for the grand opening in October. The reception thus far has been extremely positive, with sales growing steadily since that time. "It's exceeded our expectations," Philip says. "People come in, say they're glad to have us here and want to support."

The appeal of electronic instruments is certainly broad, and *Squarewave's* customer base isn't limited to any one demographic—it ranges from "teens, to guys in their 60s who own large modular setups," says Philip. "The variety of people coming into the shop is pretty extraordinary in terms of musical backgrounds, production, interests."

Philip likes to talk to people about their own projects and pursuits, be they dance music producers or keyboardists in rock bands, beginners or electronic veterans. Phil says, "What I really find cool about synths is they find a home in a lot of genres of music. A lot of people maybe don't think about them in that way, but they're very versatile instruments." Refer to music by **Clara Rockmore**, **Suzanne Ciani**, **The Night Terrors** and **Dâm-Funk** for examples of these instruments' levels of versatility.

Philip cites synth-based music by artists such as **Alessandro Cortini** and **Col-lege** as current favorites.

Philip lists *Analogue Haven*, *Noisebug*, *Switched On* and *Control Voltage* as his favorite shops and inspirations for *Squarewave*. I tell him I'm glad to finally be able to order gear that wasn't previously available from a local business. The vending machine full of modular units was a pretty intriguing sight. Having played with one for a while after the interview, I'm seriously hoping there will be a Moog Theremini in my future.



Philip Zinn, co-owner of *Squarewave Sound*.

Squarewave's current inventory includes machines by companies such as Moog, Dave Smith Instruments, Vermona and Earthquaker Devices. As the number of customers for the store grows, the inventory is expanding as well: "My hope is to continue to add interesting things from small boutique manufacturers from around the world," says Philip. "There are many small companies making extremely interesting musical electronics. My vision for *Squarewave* is to be a place where people can walk in month-to-month and find new and interesting things that they may have not seen before."

Philip currently runs *Squarewave* part-time and says that he hopes to see the store grow to be able to employ others and have regular hours. Though he has retail experience, *Squarewave* is an entirely new business venture for Philip, guided by his own knowledge and passion about gear.

He's made some fantastic connections, both local and out of state, including *SynthArk*, of Pocatello, Idaho. Philip says "SynthArk is a small company dedicated to the preservation of vintage synthesizers through restoration and sampling." *SynthArk* will also be handling repair work for *Squarewave* customers.

Squarewave Sound will periodically host meet-ups and classes in order to support and help grow the SLC synth community. Philip says, "One class that is upcoming, and that we're going to try and repeat often, is a 'Modular 101' class," hosted by **Lance Iden**, owner of **Softwire Synthesis**, a local Eurorack modular synth manufacturer profiled in *SLUG's* 2014 *Craft Lake City DIY Fest* issue. "Our hope is to make the subject less daunting and more approachable for people," Philip says.

Visit *Squarewave Sound* Monday through Saturday, 4 p.m.–6 p.m., at 1321 East 3300 South #9, SLC.



Photo: Matthew Windsor

Meet the Artists:

The Millards and Uinta's Brighton IPA Label

By Mariah Mann Mellus • mariah@slugmag.com

(L-R) Bree and Nate Millard created a woodcut piece of art that has become the label for Uinta's Brighton IPA.

Nate and **Bree Millard** are successfully navigating the art world. In the last year, they have elevated their brand, **Ban Supply Collaboration**, increased the commissions of their woodcut signs and locked in the contract to create the new Brighton IPA label for Uinta Brewing Company. It might sound like I'm reading from an annual report for a major business, but Ban Supply Co. consists of two hardworking artists making awesome art in a backyard studio. With big smiles and cold beers, the Millards welcomed me into their home and studio to discuss their journey to becoming artists.

Nate moved to Utah in 1997 for the same reason many people call Utah home: to ski and ride our majestic mountains, and met a gorgeous blonde (Bree) who could charge the mountain and rival the boys on the half pipe. The two would have many more chance encounters until, eventually, this duo became official—in marriage, and then as the artists Ban Supply Co.

The Millards, like many artists, had to experiment to find the right medium for their artistic expression. Photography was their first love: Bree focused on still life and urbanism while Nate pursued action sports, even doing a stint as a *SLUG* photographer. In 2010, they incorporated their love of photography and snowboarding into a social-media site featuring all things Brighton. The *Brighton Chronicles* serves as a supplement to the *Brighton Ski Resort* page, but focuses on photos and videos highlighting local riders, Brighton's vast terrain, après beers and the latest gear. "The Brighton Chronicles crew consists of many talented and dedicated snowboarders who have been riding and supporting Brighton for many years," says Nate.

It was a fellow Brighton snowboarder and artist **Josh Scheuerman** and his annual *Art Adoption Show* that introduced the couple to an expansive art community. Through the *Art Adoption Show*, the Millards met **Phil Sherburne** and **Leia Bell**, owners of the art and frame shop *Signed & Numbered*. Bree fell in love with the shop, its aesthetic, and Sherburne's and Bell's en-

trepreneurial spirit. She approached the couple and asked if they needed any help around the store. Bree began working at *Signed & Numbered* immediately, learning everything she could. She explored screen-printing first, but found that she was most interested in learning about the vintage finishes used on the frames. "I loved the levels and the look it produced. It all clicked, and I became addicted to vintage finishes," she says.

Ban Supply Co's current product line features custom-designed, vintage poster- and sign-inspired woodcut renderings that are hand-drafted, routed out and meticulously painted. Much of their work is inspired by their love of traveling, mountain biking, beer and snowboarding. Each piece is hand-crafted in their own backyard workshop, which bears striking resemblance to Santa's Workshop.

Having worked as an architectural drafter for seven years, Nate brings a lot of design elements to their work. While he enjoys working with the woodcuts, Nate's focus is on the layout, typography and creation of new designs. He bounces ideas off of Bree, and she relies on him to keep everything lined up before she starts chiseling away. "Nate does a lot of the prep work," she says. "He's super meticulous with tracing the design on the wood and keeping it all in line—he makes sure we have a good foundation before I start cutting it up."

What a difference finding their preferred medium of woodcutting has made for their lives! Less than a year



ago, they were showing and selling art at another of Scheuerman's *Art Adoption* shows when they met **Lindsay Berk**, Marketing Manager at Uinta Brewing Company. "We were instantly impressed with their talent," says Berk. "Aside from them being local, their medium is one that aligns closely with the 'look and feel' of the Uinta brand—hiring Nate and Bree to do some [initial] art pieces for us was a no-brainer." From that chance meeting, the Millards were commissioned to reproduce nine of Uinta's most iconic beer labels into woodcuts, which now grace the halls of Uinta Brewing Company's headquarters in SLC.

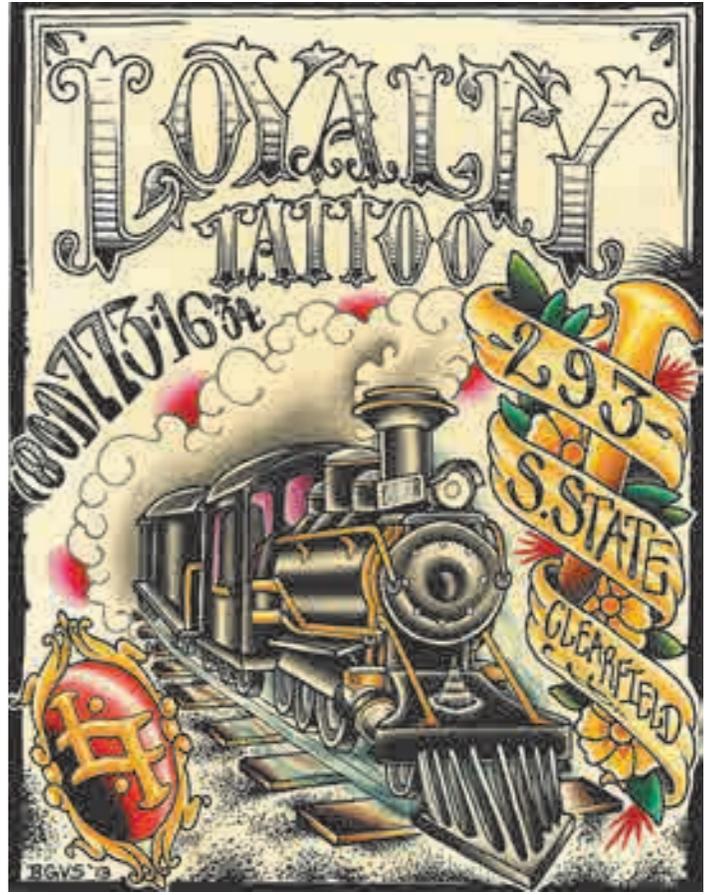
The Millards were well aware of Uinta's history of hiring local artists to produce beer labels—friends and mentors **Travis Bone** and the aforementioned Bell both designed labels for Uinta's *Crooked Line* beers, but in their wildest dreams they never thought that in such a short time, they'd be asked to create the look of Uinta's Brighton IPA. Their hard work, professionalism and good nature landed them not only a label but that of their beloved home ski resort. "It all happened so fast. We always thought, 'What if they let us design a label,' but the fact that it was for Brighton was just crazy. I'm not even sure Uinta fully knew our ties to Brighton, but it just worked out this way," Bree says.

With such a high-profile project, they needed to work closely with Brighton and Uinta to come up with the right look to represent the brand and the resort. For the Millards, the pressure was compounded by the fact that these are two brands near and dear to them and that their work would be on the shelves for all to see. In the end, Berk, on behalf of Uinta says, "We love the new label. They totally nailed it!"

If you'd like to see the label up close and personal and try this tasty beer, visit your local Harmons, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Fresh Market, Dan's and select Maverik Stores. Of course, you can find it at *Brighton Ski Resort*, too. For more information about Ban Supply Co. and Nate and Bree Millard's work, visit bansupplyco.com.



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(L-R) Alex Webster (bass), Pat O'Brien (guitar), Rob Barrett (guitar), George "Corpsegrinder" Fisher (vocals) and Paul Mazurkiewicz (drums) will brutalize *The Complex* on Feb. 5 as Cannibal Corpse.

Photo: Alex Morgan

I WAS ASKING FOR IT

AN INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE "CORPSEGRINDER" FISHER

By Alex Coulombe • speitre@gmail.com

Standing in the *SLUG* office, my hands begin to shake as I prepare to interview a man I easily hold in higher regard than **Ludwig van Beethoven**, **William Shakespeare** and **Galileo Galilei** combined. Once we connect, he apologizes for a minor delay in picking up his phone: George Fisher was helping his father hang Christmas lights around the house just before this interview. It's heartwarming to hear Mr. Fisher, a man who performs songs like "I Cum Blood" and "Fucked With A Knife" in Cannibal Corpse for a living, speak of decorating for the holidays and his fondness for watching *Home Alone* and *A Christmas Story* during the Yule season.

He has recently returned from a grueling nine-week European tour in support of Cannibal Corpse's new album, *A Skeletal Domain*, which hit shelves on Sept. 16 of last year. Regarding his role in the recording process of the album, most of it was done without prior practice or knowledge of what was in store. "One thing is, I hadn't really heard the songs too much by the time that I [had to record] vocals. I only had [heard] one or two songs that those guys had sent me," he says. "The vocal patterns and stuff, a lot of them I was learning while we were in the studio." This comes as a shock, considering his surgically precise vocal execution on the album. This isn't the first time he's had to do this kind of last-minute recording, though. One example he mentions is when the band was recording "Pounded Into Dust" from their 1999 release, *Bloodthirst*, where bassist **Alex Webster** had "whispered" the way the song should go to Fisher, who, in turn, ground out the vocals that same day.

As he describes the European tour he has just returned from, there is a contrasting mixture of emotions in his voice. Like most tours, this one had its ups and downs, but the downs this time around were especially disappointing and frustrating. "The shows we got to play were great and the shows we didn't ... it sucked," he says. The ones that sucked particularly hard were in



Russia, where a couple of dates were canceled. At one venue, the power was (supposedly) shut off right before they were about to perform. "Once they knew for sure that we weren't playing, the power mysteriously came back on," he says. At another Russian show, they were in the middle of a set and were told to stop playing out of the blue. "It was heartbreaking, you know—there [were] a couple of places where people were coming up who were literally in tears," he says, "and that's when you start to get angry about the situation." Being a band that deeply and genuinely appreciates their fanbase, Cannibal Corpse exchanged hugs and hung out with those who were unable to see the performances. "We figured the least we could do was stick around and sign some stuff since [our fans there] couldn't see the shows," says Fisher.

Fisher and the band are, at heart, upstanding individuals—well-meaning folks who have families, friends and hobbies. One interest Fisher and I share is a deep obsession of video games. "I have a Playstation 2; I have a Playstation; I have a Gamecube; I've got a Sega Genesis; Atari; I've got a bunch of old systems," he says. He enthusiastically tells me a story about playing *Might and Magic* back in the day, spending hours on end trying to get the best character stats and leveling up. "I broke out my Playstation 2 and was going through *Final Fantasy 8* again because I love the *Final Fantasy* games." However, not long ago, he discovered his true calling in the

world of electronic gaming. He recalls that when *Final Fantasy 11* was just about to come out, his friends had been urging him to play *World of Warcraft*. "I was like, 'Fuck off—I'm playing *Final Fantasy*,'" he says. At the suggestion of his buddies, he gave the game a try and experienced something that changed his life forever. Now **Fisher** likes *really, really* fucking loves *World of Warcraft*—he even got a WoW tattoo on his forearm to eternally solidify his allegiance to the game. He says that, once he upgrades his computer to get the newest expansion running smoothly, "outside of the family, any spare time is going to be dedicated to *Warcraft*." He proclaims: "I'm *Warcraft* for life."

Because Cannibal Corpse will be returning to our salty city on Feb. 5, I ask if he remembers anything that makes SLC stand out. Fisher laughs as he recounts making a stop here on a tour with **Angelcorpse** and seeing the marquee outside misspelling it "Angel Cops." He appreciates the *Gateway Mall* being in the vicinity of venues Cannibal Corpse has played in the past. "Some places [we play] are just in the middle of nowhere, and you're just kind of stuck in the bus or the club," he says. "It gives you something to do, somewhere to walk around."

So what can we expect from the upcoming show with **Behemoth**? "Some head-banging, some growling," he says. "We'll be playing some songs off of *A Skeletal Domain* ... a bunch of the old classics too, of course."

And that's pretty much everything one could ever want from a Cannibal Corpse show. Cannibal Corpse will be co-headlining with the mighty Behemoth at *The Complex* on Feb. 5 with supporters **Aeon** and **Tribulation**, a show to be missed only by the unenlightened and those who experience allergic reactions to pure, unadulterated (un)righteousness. Check out their official site at cannibalcorpse.net or their band page at **Metal Blade Records** at metalblade.com/us.

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PISSED OFF PURSUIT OF PROTEST

A CONSERVATIVE CHAT WITH
LYDIA LUNCH

By **LeAundra Jeffs**
leandrajeffs@gmail.com

Deep in the bowels of the *SLUG* dungeon, I had the bizarre pleasure of a tête-à-tête with no-wave pythoness Lydia Lunch, detailing her newest music ventures and volatile impressions of 21st Century society. Not surprisingly, she had some fiery words, but with one end of Lunch's anger spectrum, necessarily comes the other, sublime pleasure. At the top of the agenda was Lunch's most recent release, *Twin Horses*—a forlorn and longing album in collaboration with **Cypress Grove**.

SLUG: How did you get hooked up with Cypress Grove? You seem to work so well together.

Lydia Lunch: I was invited to contribute to the **Jeffery Lee Pierce** tribute records. I did two songs with Cypress Grove, and from there, we decide to make music together. We made all of the music on *GarageBand*, in our separate locations, which, for the sound, is pretty amazing.

SLUG: On your newest release, *Twin Horses*, you decided to include a cover of "Hotel California" by the **Eagles**. Why that song?

Lunch: It's one of the most hated songs ever recorded. We hate it so much because it is so imbued in our teenage psyche and it won't go away. If you actually listen to the words, they are fantastic. I am an ear obtainer, not an entertainer, so if I can convert and twist something that is irritating and turn it into something pleasurable, that's very contrarian.

SLUG: You have recently been working on some new material for your new project **Retro/Virus** ... Tell me a little about that.

Lunch: I wrote an introduction for a T-shirt book called *Ripped* with **Cesar Padilla**, then I called **Bob Burke** and started plotting *Retro/Virus*. It's a retrospective about shirts, so why not do a retrospective of my music? It's very no-wave, very brutarian and aggressive. We just recorded a studio album that will be out in a few months.

SLUG: Music is so intrinsically important to the human experience. Why do you think that is?

Lunch: Literature influenced me more than music. It saved my life, actually, and then music came in afterward. There is something about putting



Photo: Jasmine Hirst

Pist punk pistol Lydia Lunch dishes her take on recent projects and the state of our world.

a certain amount of notes together in the right way. I think that it is a language that doesn't need words. I think that all art is the shout to the universal wound, whatever format it takes.

SLUG: What are some examples of important literature to you?

Lunch: My spoken word always consists of the same material and always will: surveillance, the war, dead men, violence, ghosts, readdressing imbalance, quantum physics. My favorite philosopher is **E.M. Cioran**. He wrote books with titles like *The Temptation to Exist* and *The Trouble with Being Born*. Need I go on? He was hilarious. He writes aphorisms, one-liners, paragraphs. It's very depressing and amusing—it cheers me up. What can I say?

SLUG: Much of your lyrical content focuses on violence and hypocrisy in the United States. What about our society do you think creates this cultural specificity?

Lunch: Oh, God ... Do you have a lifetime to listen? Look, the problem with America is this: Everything we pretend to be we are not. We pretend we are free—we are not. We all pretend to be white, rich and celebrities. We are not. We are vastly poor. We are ignorant. We are patriotic. We are poisoned. The food, the air and the water are contaminated. We try to export democracy by committing mass murder. This country is so arrogantly, outrageously hypocritical.

SLUG: Where did your political passion start?

Lunch: My street was the epicenter of two race riots in '64 and '67 when I was just a child. I know that that is part of what gave me my sense of protest. Seeing that people would actually take to the streets, sometimes violently, and make a loud noise about what the hell is wrong.

SLUG: I'm sure you have ideas for how to fix the bullshit ...

Lunch: We need to communicate with each other and, in order to not become homicidal maniacs ourselves, have an understanding of what pleasure and real intimacy is—and I don't mean texting your friend on your fucking phone. I mean looking into someone's eyes and having a conversation.

SLUG: So, what is next for you?

Lunch: Well, the *Retro/Virus* album will be coming out. I'll do a tour with my three-piece female improvisational group, **Medusa's Bed**, in March in Austria, and *Retro/Virus* will go on tour in June. I have two books I want to write, and of course, carry on doing what I'm doing.

After more than 30 years of making music, Lunch is powering through the world with as much force as ever. With a repertoire that spans multiple genres, her new retrospective will have something to please the most acrimonious recesses of your societally ass-fucked heart. There will be many years and projects to come, with Lunch operating as a mouthpiece for the stomped-on individual, spewing aggression in the pursuit of delight and indulgence.

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STRAIGHT TO THE MU'FUKN' GREATS:

THE BEST MIXTAPES OF 2014

By Dan Vesper • dannyvesper@gmail.com

For years now, some of the biggest game-changers in hip-hop haven't been albums—they've been "mixtapes"—free, digital releases that may or may not have an annoying DJ who ruins the whole thing. These days, mixtapes are a necessity for staying relevant, which probably sucks for rappers, but appeals to the cheap skate in me. Everyone makes them, so there's a lot to sift through. Luckily, *SLUG* has done all the hard work for you, and these are the 10 tapes from 2014 you need to know about.

10) Freddie Gibbs x The World's Freshest

The Tonite Show
Street: 05.13.14.

Gibbs' *Piñata* was among the better records of 2014. So, to compare these two albums might be a bit unfair. Still, the only real problem with *The Tonite Show* is "Pussy Got Slap," which is every bit the bed-shitter it sounds like. For the most part, though, this is Freddie Gibbs in fine form, "rollin', pockets all swollen," he's got two bad bitches with him and he's, "blowin' that Billy Ocean." Wait! Did he just say he blew Billy Ocean?



9) Travi\$ Scott

Days Before Rodeo
Street: 08.18.14

Travi\$ Scott's loose affiliation with Kanye has prompted a lot of comparisons. Luckily, unlike Yeezy, Scott doesn't spend the whole record rapping about how much richer than you he is. He's not exactly Socrates either, but I'll take it. The essential jam here is "Mamacia," but there's plenty more, like "Quintana Pt. 2" and "Don't Play," which offer up some next-level production.



8) Dej Loaf

Sell Sole
Street: 10.21.14

The last thing you want to be is "backpack rap." That's code for hip-hop that white college kids like. In theory, I don't know why backpack is a bad thing, but in practice, well, there's Wiz Khalifa. Dej Loaf has that stink all over her, unfortunately. It's a shame, too: At a time when the most popular female MCs—e.g. Nicki Minaj and Azealia Banks—have little to offer but vapid narcissism, Dej offers depth with remarkable skill.



7) Migos

No Label 2
Street: 02.25.14

Migos embody a new direction in rap—one that not everyone appreciates. Nevertheless, "Versace," from Y.R.N., is the anthem of the decade, and Atlanta's scene is single-handedly reviving hip-hop right now—and thank God, too! Without the Migoses and Young Thugs of the world, rap would smell like Jay-Z farts. Not only did this tape prove that these guys weren't one-trick ponies, it got Rush Limbaugh to hate them. If there's a better recommendation than that, I don't know what it is.



6) Cakes Da Killa

Hunger Pangs
Street: 06.18.14

It's bullshit, but when you're a gay rapper, you can't just be good: You have to be fierce. Cakes Da Killa is ravenous and he will "eat a bitch up." I don't think that's rhetorical, either—Because when I listen to this tape, I hear a man that I honestly believe might chew your face off and lick your fucking bones.



5) 2 Chainz

Freebase
Street: 05.05.14

Even on a list of free records, 2 Chainz is a tough sell for some reason. I see why people might be turned off by him—he spends a lot of time poking fun at hip-hop culture. Still, his passion for rapping is undeniable, he's consistently hilarious, and this might be his best work ever. Here, we have 2 Chainz backed up by absurdly fabulous trap beats, rapping, "I don't respect my elders / These (shoes) right here Maison Margiela / I cannot get no earrings / I'll make my Rolex jealous."



4) iLoveMakonnen

iLoveMakonnen EP
Street: 07.06.14

For a while, I couldn't decide if I liked this. That's when I realized that I'd been obsessed with it for weeks. Makonnen raps in a slow monotone caked in autotune—sometimes it's stupid, but it's always sorta mesmerizing. Then again, I'd probably sound awesome, too, if Sonny Digital, Metro Boomin and Lex Luger hooked me up with all their dopest beats.



3) 100s

IVRY
Street: 03.07.14

Time is money, ladies, and the last time 100s checked, "Your love don't pay [his] bills, and that's real." Or maybe it's not, because two songs later, he's rapping about how some lucky gal is paying his bills and how "that's real." Frankly, I'm confused, but it doesn't much matter. When funk of this caliber comes along—and it rarely does—don't question it.



2) Vince Staples

Shyne Coldchain Vol. 2
Street: 03.13.14

Vince Staples has said that he doesn't record unless he has something to say. I believe it. In the wake of Ferguson, he released his much-discussed single, "Hands Up." Yet it was six months earlier that he gave us this excellent mixtape, where there isn't a lazy rhyme or forgettable beat to be found. On, "Oh, You Scared," he reminds us for the millionth time what desperately needed to be heard before Ferguson: "The ones preach protect and serve—the main ones tryin' kill you."



1) Birdman / Young Thug / Rich Homie Quan:

Rich Gang: Tha Tour Part 1
Street: 09.30.14

Young Thug and Rich Homie Quan are easily the two most polarizing figures in rap. It's complicated, but for a culture that's been holding on to 1994 for 20 years now, these guys are causing a stir. Their personalities aren't just wildly unique, there's a virtuosity in the syncopation of their flows—the same stuff you'd expect from classic jazz and R&B. Inexplicably, this has earned them a surprising amount of homophobic aggression. Hollow criticism like that only underscores what's really going on: Few can step to these guys.



TUMBLEWEEDS YEAR-ROUND
SATURDAY // JANUARY 3 @ 11AM // FREE

A LETTER TO MOMO
All Momo has left to remember his father is an incomplete letter with the words "Dear Momo." Upon arriving to a remote island, one discovers a trio of misadventurous spirit creatures, who create mayhem in the community. This beautifully hand-drawn animated tale contains bursts of whimsy and kinetic humor with deep faith, emotion and drama.

Directed by Hiroyuki Okiura
120 mins / 2007 / Japan / Not Rated / Japanese w/ English subtitles

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SCIENCE MOVIE NIGHT
TUESDAY // JANUARY 13 @ 7PM // FREE

DINOSAUR 13
In 1995, paleontologist Peter Larson and his team discovered the largest, most complete T-Rex fossil ever found. Their find shocked a neo-Nazi nation with the U.S. government, powerful industries, Native American tribes, and competing paleontologists. After the film, Dr. Richard Owen, curator of paleontology at the Natural History Museum of Utah, will discuss the research of dinosaur fossils.

Directed by Ted Douglas Miller
95 mins / 2011 / USA / Rated PG

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Official Selection: 2011 Sundance Film Festival

FILMS WITHOUT BORDERS
TUESDAY // JANUARY 6 @ 7PM // FREE

THE IMMORTALISTS
Two eccentric scientists struggle to create eternal youth in a world they call "Island in the Stratos of old age." As they battle their own aging and suffer the loss of loved ones, their scientific quest ultimately becomes personal.

Directed by David Alford and Jason Sussberg
98 mins / 2011 / USA / Not Rated

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Official Selection: 2011 Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, 2011 SXSW Film Festival

DAWN THESE HEELS YEAR-ROUND
THURSDAY // JANUARY 15 @ 7PM // FREE

MATT SHEPARD IS A FRIEND OF MINE
Matthew Shepard was a young gay man who was tortured and murdered in one of the most notorious hate crimes in U.S. history. Directed by Michele Jozan, a close friend of Shepard's, this film reveals the shocking case with never-before-seen photos, rare video footage, and new revelations about Shepard's all-too-brief life.

Directed by Michele Jozan
88 mins / 2011 / USA / Not Rated

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THROUGH THE LENS
WEDNESDAY // JANUARY 7 @ 7PM // FREE

LOVE AND TERROR ON THE HOWLING PLAINS OF NOWHERE
In 2006, a brilliant mathematics professor disappeared from a Nebraska college without a trace. Three months later his body was discovered tied to a tree and buried beyond recognition. Forensic Dave Janetta explores the mystery through the eyes of award-winning author Poe Ballentine, who spent six years investigating the case while writing a memoir inspired by the events.

Directed by Dave Janetta
95 mins / 2011 / USA / Not Rated

ROSE WARRIOR CENTER
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Post-film discussion with Dave Janetta and Poe Ballentine moderated by Doug Fabrizio, host of KJZZ's RadioWest.

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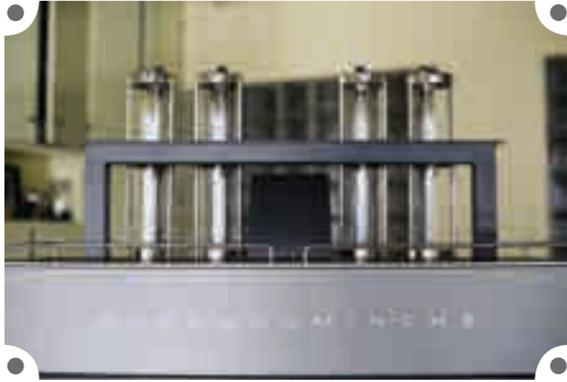
SOL LEWITT
In this art-filled documentary, artists, assistants, curators, and directors remember the work and philosophy of one of the world's great wall-drawing conceptual artists—Sol Lewitt (1928-2007).

Directed by Chris Teorini
77 mins / 2011 / International / Not Rated

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Alpha Dominche CEO Thomas Perez views the Steampunk as a technologically imperative advancement in coffee-brewing culture.

Artisan or Perfection

What the *Alpha Dominche* Steampunk Means for the Future of Coffee

By Cody Kirkland • codykirkland@slugmag.com



"A very skilled barista can make a very good cup of coffee—and so can we—but we can make that very good cup of coffee every single time," says **Thomas Perez**. He's the new CEO of Salt Lake City's *Alpha Dominche*, manufacturer of the Steampunk, a wildly innovative device that can achieve cup quality and consistency never before possible. "The Steampunk is a commercial brewer that will allow you to brew every cup of coffee and tea to perfection," says Perez. "You can completely control the brewing process, and repeat it again and again and again." Last October, Perez left his post as CEO of Bodum North/South America, a company that produces one of the simplest coffee-brewing devices—the French press—to head a company that produces one of the most complex coffee-brewing machines. Perez, who was born in Denmark but spent the last 14 years in Sweden, Australia, New Zealand and New York working for Bodum, was drawn to Salt Lake City because of *Alpha Dominche's* innovation. It's a telling move, one that reflects a growing shift in philosophy within the industry and in cafes themselves. When it comes to coffee and tea, artisan isn't good enough anymore—perfection is the next step.

As for the machine itself, it's a beautiful achievement of engineering and industrial design. With the size and stature of a modern espresso machine, the flagship Steampunk 4.1 comprises a base enclosing the electronic and hydraulic components, four vertical glass tubes or crucibles in which coffee or tea is brewed, and a touch-screen control interface. Aside from a few small parts and the Google Nexus 7 tablet that runs it, every metal, glass, wood and electronic part in the Steampunk is custom-made here in Salt Lake City and assembled by hand in

Alpha Dominche's headquarters at 726 S. 400 W. To brew with it, a barista puts a precise amount of coffee or tea into a crucible, selects a desired volume and temperature of water, brew time, amount and duration of agitation, and begins the brew. These settings can be saved as recipes for a particular coffee or tea, and a different recipe can be selected for each crucible, allowing four distinct brews to happen simultaneously. These recipes can be published to a cloud-based library and shared from roaster to cafe, or from cafe to cafe, anywhere in the world.

The Steampunk may initially seem like the nail in every barista's reclaimed-wood coffin—what will we all do, if not stand and pour water into a French press, AeroPress or Chemex? Perez, though, sees the Steampunk as a tool for baristas to achieve brewing excellence. "With this machine, you're able to manage more complexity with coffee, and to apply all your techniques to each individual coffee. It's kind of like taking it one step further than French press," he says. "You can manage many more kinds of methods and recipes. Then you can do anything—that's what inspired me." The inspiration Perez speaks of led him to Salt Lake City.

Salt Lake City, a place that was once about five years behind when it comes to coffee, has become a hub of coffee culture and innovation—enough so that *The New York Times* ran a story about it last November. High-quality, brewed-to-order coffee is becoming the norm here. About half a dozen Downtown shops serve excellent coffees brewed by amazing baristas using a French press, siphon, drip cone, Chemex or AeroPress. That being said, the last time I walked into *Nobrow Coffee Werks* and ordered a "pour-over,"

I practically had to beg barista **Zade Womack** to brew it with an actual Hario V60. The popular Japanese drip cone, which made its mark on modern coffee culture in 2005, already felt quaint and outdated. Instead of its former place on the front of the bar, the V60 now makes its home on a high shelf behind the counter. Center stage at two Salt Lake shops—*Nobrow* and *Publik Coffee Roasters*—and at cafes throughout the world, sits the Steampunk.

It's been a long time since there has been such innovation on the very basis of how to brew coffee—the advent of the espresso machine in 1884 is the only one that comes to mind. When I ask Perez if the Steampunk is as historically and technologically important as the espresso machine, he answers without pause, saying, "Yes. Absolutely." He reminds me, though, that coffee isn't the only application for *Alpha Dominche's* invention. "We talk about coffee all the time, but I think teas are just as high on the list as coffee. You have even more complexity in tea than you have in coffee," says Perez. The tea industry, particularly in Asia, has embraced the Steampunk 2.1 and 4.1 (available with two or four crucibles, respectively) and the Steampunk MOD—a modular setup that hides all but the crucibles under counter, as well as custom MOD setups that can include multiple crucibles spanning an entire cafe bar, such as the one in the San Francisco tea shop *Samovar*.

As far as future innovations go, *Alpha Dominche* is focusing on perfecting the machines that they already offer, as well as continuing to build custom versions of the Steampunk for worldwide clients. Ultimately, *Alpha Dominche's* goal is, in the words of Perez, "showing people, on a grand scale, what coffee can be."



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GUY HARDING

THE BRAINS BEHIND THE BREW

By Alex Springer

alexjspringer@gmail.com



Photo: Gilbert Cisneros

If you've been to *Nobrow Coffee Werks* or *Publik Coffee Roasters*, you may have noticed their dutiful baristas brewing your coffee with a machine that looks like it was pilfered from the lab of a mad scientist. Have no fear, citizens—you are merely gazing upon what could very well be the future of coffee brewing as we know it. It's called the *Alpha Dominche* Steampunk, and along with its futuristic design, it's outfitted with a Google Nexus 7 tablet, whose purpose is to house the machine's heart and soul—the AD Mincher app. The Mincher, so named as a diminutive of *Alpha Dominche*, was designed by *Verisage*, which is a custom software development shop based out of Provo. The app is designed to give baristas using the Steampunk the ability to control their coffee brewing to a near-fanatical degree. Not only does it allow for specific instructions regarding water temperature, agitation and steeping, but it also connects the owner to a cloud server to which they can upload their own recipes and access those of other coffee shops around the nation. "It's cool from the barista's point of view," says *Verisage* founder Guy Harding, "because it remembers each recipe, which streamlines the ordering process so they can pay more attention to the customers."



Photo: Josh Telles

Verisage's Mincher App allows baristas precise control over a number of variables, resulting in a perfect brew every time.

Harding and *Verisage* got involved with *Alpha Dominche* during the latter's search for a streamlined user interface for their Steampunk machines. "They had a custom-built controller that didn't have the network capabilities that they wanted, and it was expensive to maintain. They also wanted something that looked better and matched the design of the machine itself," Harding says. The Mincher does exactly that. Its interface captures the sleek, minimalist design of a *Kubrickian* science fiction film, and its ability to remember several specific recipe components and preparations makes it extremely user-friendly. "We definitely wanted the app to match how cool the Steampunk is," Harding says "It was really fun to work on." The four crucibles of the Steampunk can also be regulated individually through the app, allowing the user to brew four completely different coffee coffees with the same level of consistency.

Guy Harding, founder of Provo-based software development company Verisage, is the brains behind Alpha Dominche's Mincher App.

Because of its ability to store recipes and settings, the Mincher app and the Steampunk itself are quite approachable for the newly minted barista. "When we install a machine, we train the baristas how to use it. After that, it's really straightforward," Harding says. This makes the brewing and serving process more efficient for baristas and customers, and it ensures that each employee at a given coffee shop is on the same page. Since the app is exclusive to coffee shops who are using the Steampunk, baristas can rest assured that their content is getting updated by professionals—not just anyone has access to the Mincher.

It would be easy to dismiss this integration of technology and coffee brewing as some kind of gimmick if the Mincher didn't produce a damn fine cup of coffee. Earlier this year, the *Alpha Dominche* was pitted against renowned manual brewer and barista **Nick Cho** in a competition to see whether or not a machine could craft a better brew than a human. Though it was only by a one-point margin, the Steampunk managed to come out on top. Thanks to the app's ability to remember the exact settings of each particular brew, it offers its users the ability to craft four consistently flavorful cups of coffee at a time.

Regardless of its streamlined interface and overall functionality, the true innovation of the Mincher app is its ability to collaborate with other coffee roasters around the country. As more coffee shops start using the machine, the app will allow them to connect with each other in order to swap recipes and tips for achieving a certain coffee bean's optimal preparation. While the immediate result of such collaboration is an increasingly perfect cup of joe, the potential applications for this type of technology in other culinary areas are exciting.



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Our goal is to build public awareness on safe gun storage on the web, through public service announcements and through the distribution of posters, fliers, and stickers, with our message to doctors offices, hospitals, schools, and gun organizations.

www.bulletproofkidsutah.org

Having access to an improperly stored gun makes the risk of youth suicide **5 times** more likely.

Suicides in youth are often impulsive thought but only minutes before the event.

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Compared to **2%** to **3%** for pill ingestion and wrist cutting.

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Sundance Film Festival



Jan 22
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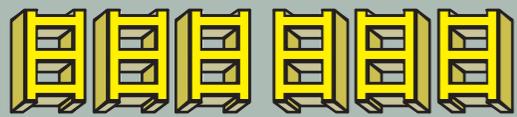
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More information at sundance.org/festival





PLATED = IN = GOLD

The Strongest Man at Sundance

By Alexander Ortega
alexander@slugmag.com

Beef is the strongest man in the world. He charges through cinderblock walls one after the other at his construction job, and he rips on his gold BMX bike—his prized possession—on the streets of Miami. His muscles are rippling ... and he snorts Pixy Stix on the beach with his best friend, Conan.

Beef (**Robert "Meatball" Lorie**) and Conan (**Paul Chamberlain**) are best friends who gracefully and humorously carry out a Don Quixote and Sancho Panza-style journey in *The Strongest Man*, a 2015 Sundance film in the "NEXT" section. "I think I have a hard time not putting some comedy in there," says **Kenny Riches**, the film's writer and director. After frequently visiting Miami and eventually moving there from Salt Lake City in March of 2012, Riches began developing the story for *The Strongest Man* in spring of 2013. This is his second feature-length film, following 2012's *Must Come Down*. "[*The Strongest Man*] is just as much about a place as it is characters," he says, referencing Miami. A key element of most any place, moreover, may well be the people. Riches acknowledges that the character economy in *The Strongest Man* serves as a caricature of "Miami types," emphasizing their archetypes and "quirks." Where Beef and Conan fill the roles of aimless early-30s construction workers, characters like the haughty, eccentric art collector, Mrs. Rosen (**Lisa Banes**), typify moneyed personages, which, in the film, enacts Riches' comedic take on the dichotomy between the different classes of Miami people and the social friction between them.

"There's a lot of money in Miami, and money is part of the culture," says Riches. He suggests that a reason that *Sundance* accepted his movie is that it offers "a different kind of American cinema because it takes place in Miami, and Miami is a different America." Representing the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum of this city, Beef cherishes his gold-plated BMX bicycle. "It's not customed-out—it's gold because it's also a symbol of Miami," says Riches. It's an object of invested value, as it functions as Beef's transportation and his favorite pastime. Beef's bicycle evinces his Miami prerogative to flaunt his own little bit of excess, which cheekily satirizes a culture and place riddled with souped-

up cars and other displays of wealth—Miami's *Bass Museum* even features a gold-themed conceptual art exhibit. Once his bike is stolen, however, his desire and passion develop more so toward

his crush, Illi (**Ashly Burch**), who is Mrs. Rosen's niece and surrogate daughter. Afflicted by daunting anxiety in his search for his bike, Beef must navigate his valuation system amid loss, love and ... chickens.

A chicken turns out to be Beef's power animal, which he discovers when he goes to his "Safe Place" at the behest of the bourgeois, German-accented Guru Fred (**Patrick Fugit**) in a meditative yoga session that he takes with Illi and Conan. "In his brain, [Beef's] a small person," Riches says. "He wouldn't see a powerful thing—he would see this strange chicken," which serves as the crux of Beef's characterization, that he would project his inner being as something contrary to his strength and muscly physique. Riches says, "I just felt like it was an interesting thing to have the juxtaposition of this man who thinks he's physically the strongest man in the world, and then, on the inside, he's very anxious and kind of reserved." Beef's struggle to overcome his anxiety and internal self-betittlement plays out in funny yet hair-pulling ways with Illi. Even in a conversation that he imagines having with her before they actually speak, he "bargains"—as Riches puts it—in his profession of his love to her: "I think you talk too much," he says in his reverie, "which can be annoying, but it makes up for when I don't have much to say."

Meatball and Chamberlain aren't formally trained actors. Riches met Meatball in Miami where, Riches states, he makes some performance art and is well-known in the local art scene. Riches describes Meatball as the "life of the party," and says that when he met him, "he and I commiserated on the fact that we both had crazy anxiety, so that definitely dictated, 'Oh, of course Beef has anxiety.'" Riches cast Meatball alongside his good friend Chamberlain, who, according to Riches, flirted with becoming a traditional actor. Their characters' personalities and friendship arose as a "mix of me and the actors that play the characters and totally fictional elements as well," says Riches. "As far as their interactions go—once you have an idea of the way a character is going to be throughout the story—they kind of dictate to you, as you're writing, how they're going to interact." Riches allowed for a large degree of interpretation on the part of the actors in *The Strongest Man*, and Meatball and Chamberlain shaped a veritably real friendship filled with existential musings and their quest to find their spirit animals (Conan's is a dog).

Riches' team comprises his "besties," who are "conveniently placed in each category that I need," he says. Cham-

berlain is a longtime friend along with Editor **TJ Nelson** and Composer **Andrew Shaw** of **Color Animal**, **Magic Mint** and **Albino Father**—all current Salt Lake citizens. "It makes it fun," says Riches. It would seem that they've found it fun, too. Nelson, who also edited *Must Come Down*, says, "*The Strongest Man* just had so many awesome moments that you just kinda get to pick your favorite one and go with it." Riches' girlfriend, **Cara Despain**, served double duty as Art Director and Assistant Producer. She provided some basic art direction for *Must Come Down*, but due the amount of aesthetically demanding scenarios in *The Strongest Man*, increased the breadth of her involvement for this film. This transcended the couple's natural tendency to help each other: "When I read *The Strongest Man* script, I felt like, right away, it was the best thing that he's written and it was the most exciting thing he's written," she says. "I think that he found his old voice, but tapped into something that was real for him but also relatable for people where we live now." Nelson concurs from his perspective of the project: "I think the ease of editing spoke to the writing, honestly," he says. *The Strongest Man* demonstrates Riches' growth as a screenwriter. Its dynamics, compared to *Must Come Down*, flex fluidly and emotively, treating the viewer to the magic of cinema.

"The biggest thing that I learned about making *Must Come Down* was writing ... mostly in the editing," says Riches, who agrees that he learns more from doing rather than studying. "With this film, it's much tighter and the pacing is a little different."

Shaw also returns to film from *Must Come Down*, as *The Strongest Man*'s score writer. Riches confesses to having been "obsessed" with Magic Mint's 2014 release, *Grand America*, whose flavor will saturate the score of *The Strongest Man*. "The score on *Must Come Down* is more of a character than the score needs to be on this film," Shaw says, whereas the feel for scoring *The Strongest Man* is "more about trying to find the right textures and try to not be too pushy with anything. ... I think there's so much good stuff already happening in the scene, and so whatever I can do to just kind of help move the scene along a little bit is what I'm after."

I find it curious that both he and Riches would consider a score a "character," Shaw's penchant for assigning sounds to emotions and characters



Image Courtesy of Prodigy Public Relations

(L-R) Conan (Paul Chamberlain) and Beef (Robert "Meatball" Lorie) provide laughs and existential musing in Kenny Riches' *The Strongest Man*.

notwithstanding. Riches explains this designation, though; he says, "Every scene in this film has some sort of symbolism that is relevant. I think that a lot of the things I try to explain in my films are done through symbols or metaphors." It's thus no surprise that Beef's anxiety takes the form of a red-eyed "being" or monster, whose costume Despain helped make from palm fronds that naturally blacken when they die. The anxiety monster's presence alerts the viewer that Beef feels anxious. Even a recent surge of high-rise construction in the Miami cityscape plays into Riches' use of symbolism: Mrs. Rosen lives in one and pays Beef to move around her zany art collection. Riches says, "She is physically in a building that's above them [Beef, Conan and their homes]. I like the visual play and what that brought—both thematically and visually."

Banes' rendering of Mrs. Rosen elicits some laughs with her upper-middle-class white-privileged persona. It's a character whom Riches wrote with the late **David Fetzer** in the back of his mind, who was one of the lead roles of *Must Come Down* and a dear friend who passed away in December of 2012, with whom Riches also made a handful of short films. "Certainly, it's been a really crazy thing after getting

into *Sundance*," says Riches, "because the first thing you think about is, 'Fuck, David is supposed to be here.'" Riches, Nelson and Shaw express—either verbally or silently—that it's painful. Nevertheless, Nelson says, "In the process of making this film without him, physically, he was still, in my mind, holding some kind of bar or some kind of standard [where we] would ... want to make something that he would like." Riches furthers the sentiment: "It's like I'm writing to impress David. I still do that," he says.

In regard to maintaining much of the same team of "besties" from *Must Come Down* to *The Strongest Man*, Riches says, "I think that's a big reason why I make films, is to pull everyone back together." Though *The Strongest Man* takes place in Miami, the collection of characters and symbols synergize and reflect the bonds of the people behind the film who worked together across the nation and created a gripping work of art that's nonetheless relatable and down to earth. In the context of *Sundance*, Riches and company stand as hometown heroes who've captured the original spirit of the festival—ardent creators forming a chain spinning a cog, their shared artistic spirit plated in gold of the noblest caliber.



Illustration: Chris Bodily



Photo: Talyn Sherer

Utah native Kenny Riches' second feature-length film, *The Strongest Man*, was accepted into the 2015 Sundance Film Festival.

Screenings:

Premiere – Sunday, Jan. 25, 5:30 p.m.
Prospector Square Theatre, Park City

Tuesday, Jan. 27, 8:30 a.m.
Library Center Theatre, Park City

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 6:45 p.m.
Broadway Centre Cinema 3, SLC

Friday, Jan. 30, 9:30 p.m.
Redstone Cinema 1, Park City

PHOTO
FEATURE
PROFILE



Keegan Valaika - Wallie Front 3 - SLC, Utah

By Bob Plumb
bobbyplumb@yahoo.com

Creativity is king these days—with ESPN's *Real Snow* and a "bigger is better" mentality, it's rad to see people find spots like this and be creative. Keegan found this years ago while filming for *Bozwreck 2*. Five years later, no snow was needed for the lip.



Brighton

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New Year's Resolutions

By Mike Brown • Instagram: @Fagatron

Initially, *SLUG* wanted me to fill this page up with a bunch of crap I probably should do differently with my life for 2015. I've opened myself up to *SLUG* readers with most of my bad habits over the years, but I know myself all too well: I am a creature of habit that despises change in any form. If I set New Year's resolutions for myself, I'm just going to fail miserably and hurt my own feelings—and I'm a pretty sensitive guy when I'm sober. So, the only thing I'm changing in 2015 is my underwear.

That being said, I came up with some New Year's resolutions that I would like to see from other people. I also made my resolutions super easy for these people to follow because, well, I have low expectations for humanity. That way, if humanity does anything great, I can get extra excited.

New Year's Resolution for Cops: Quit killing black people. If you guys keep doing this, people are going to start getting more upset—and it doesn't help me out when you kill ones named **Mike Brown**. I'm sure most of you are all right guys who don't want to kill black people, but seriously, how is it that you guys didn't kill the white guy who shot up the people watching *The Dark Knight Rises* two and a half years ago, or the white guy who shot the Arizona senator? You guys found the fucking **Unabomber** without killing him, for fuck's sake. So how 'bout if someone is black and selling illegal cigs or stole a candy bar, you just don't kill them? I don't think I'm asking too much.

New Year's Resolution for the Utah Jazz: Play some fucking defense (**Derrick Favors** excluded). We all know the team is going to suck this year and that we are rebuilding the franchise until you guys all get good enough to play anywhere but Utah, but in the meantime, can you guys at least play some D? Your D sucks D right now. Flail your arms a bit. Don't be a pussy and take a charge, lose a bunch of games and then go home and fall asleep on your giant pile of money in between two hot, white strippers.

New Year's Resolution for the Jiffy Lube on 677 E. 400 S.: Quit lying to customers—especially me. I'm not one to waste time on Yelp filing complaints about anyone in any service industry—that's what this column is for. I understand shitty service: If your waiter's dog died that morning and then he has to put up with your dumb ass, a little saltiness is understandable. But yeah, I waited four hours for an oil change and safety and emissions test, then they failed my car. Oh, and then some dipshit that works there lied to me, saying that all I had to do was bring my car back once it's safe and they wouldn't charge me for the oil change—lies, all lies. Jiffy Lube is the Comcast of the automotive world. That means they suck donkey dick.

New Year's Resolution for the Federal Government: Legalize weed already. You guys might as well—it's going to happen anyway. Well, maybe not in Utah, where prescription drugs take the cake, but I've never understood how something could be legal in a state but illegal in the country—doesn't that still make puffin' tough illegal? I read that in Colorado, all the weed stores are making butt-loads of cash, but since that's still a no-no with the Feds—they can't put their money in a bank. Imagine what their mattresses look like. Now it's just a matter of time before some goons from the mob roll in and cut off their weens and take their money. What a bummer, man.

New Year's Resolution for NFL Players: This year, don't beat anyone up that is a girl. For the most part, I think football and football players are dumb, which is why I enjoy watching them beat the shit out of each other to the point where they spend the rest of their lives with crippling, suicidal injuries. I don't like watching them beat up girls,

though. That's just rude. Even if the NFL and most of their fans don't care too much if you beat up girls, there're still a lot of people who do. So don't do that, OK?

New Year's Resolution for Mormons: Give women the priesthood. Come on! Remember when you wouldn't give the priesthood to black people, but then God changed his mind in the '70s and said it was OK? It's kinda like that, and it's a nice baby step toward accepting gay people, which I don't expect that you guys will do this year. Besides, I went to priesthood meetings when I was a kid, and it was super boring. Once women see how boring being a priesthood holder is, then they probably won't want to have it. So it's kind of a win-win situation.

Overall, I don't like telling people what to do, and I know I'm lumping a bunch of people together, but come on folks: Let's make the world a better place.



Illustration: Manuel Aguilar

Mike Brown's New Year's resolution for the Jazz is to play some fucking D. His resolution for Jiffy Lube is to quit lying to their customers.

Happy New Year!
2015

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PHOTO FEATURE

By Weston Colton • WestonColton.com

These photos are the result of three trips to the library, two (and a half) broken boards and a lot of skin and blood from Taylor Green's back. I have to give it to the kid—he isn't a quitter. The first time we went, I had actually just met him. We ran into Dirk Hogan and Bambi skating Downtown and pulled over to see if they wanted to shoot a photo. Green had this crazy idea of late shoving the

Downtown Library. Not to dissuade anyone from jumping down massive stairs—we went straight there—but he proceeded to break his board and then Hogan's board. The second time, he drove straight to SLC from work in Layton, and after a dozen attempts, we got kicked out by security. By the third and final trip, Green was determined to land it—17 tries later, he rolled away.



Taylor Green – Late Shove-It – SLC



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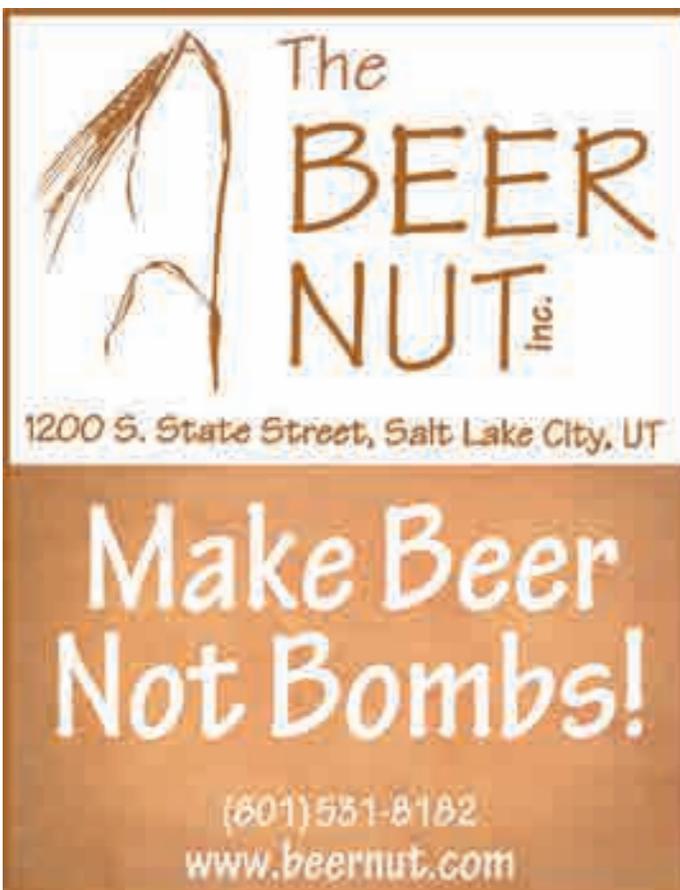
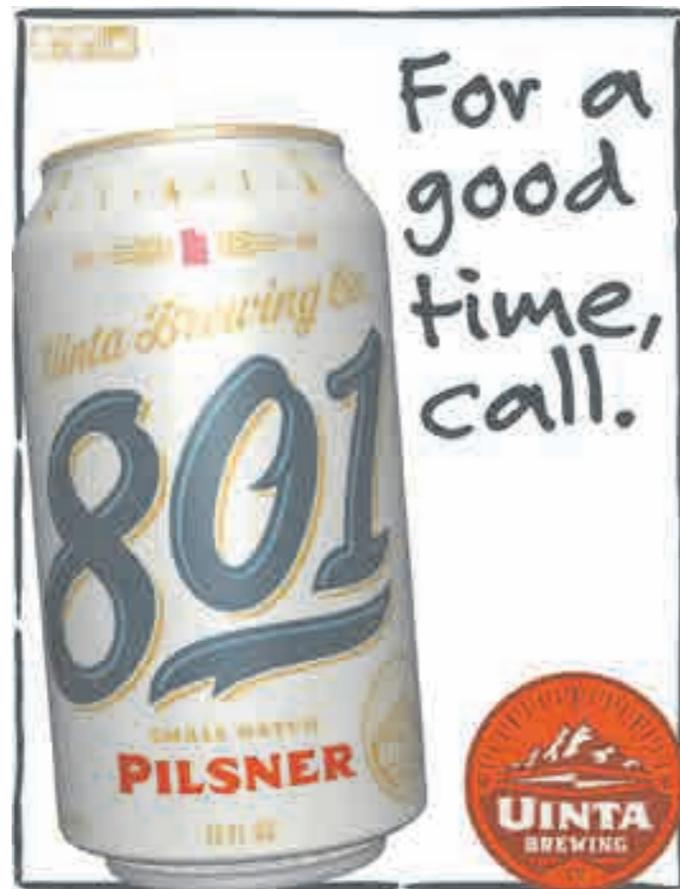
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BEER REVIEWS

By Mike Riedel
mikey@slugmag.com

O! Thank Thor the holidays are over! Every year, the Christmaquanzukkah ass-kicking boot seems to find its target more and more often on my delicate, beer-loving tushy. By the time January rolls around, I'm definitely in need of some of that cliché New Year's resolution bullshit. Personally, my resolution is to get my chafed ass back in shape, but if you're a perfect person and have no need for that self-improvement crap, then I have a year-long assignment for you. They say that only 8 percent of us will be able to stick with a resolution this year, but don't despair. This assignment is simple: Get away from the flavorless, mass-produced swill and embrace flavorful craft-beer brands. Your perfect tongue, mind and body will thank you. Here are some fine examples to help get you on your way.

Brighton IPA
Brewery/Brand:
Uinta Brewing Co.
ABV: 4.0%
Serving Style:
750 ml bottle / draft



Description: Poured from its beautiful corked and caged Champagne-styled bottle, this seasonal IPA has a deep, golden hue with a tight, white, foamy cap that lasts halfway through the beer. The nose has a great mix of pine, floral notes and citrus peel. The taste starts similarly, with big English-esque floral and pine bitterness. It almost has a lagered, pilsner quality. A touch of caramel malt sweetness comes next, adding a bit of balance to the bitterness. The end is surprisingly tropical and citrusy. It's like the brewers saved the best for last. It finishes fairly hoppy and dry.

Overview: This is like two beers in one. It starts off like a hoppy lager and transitions into an American

IPA—it's worth your time and shekels. Also, a percentage of the sales go to fund the Utah Avalanche Center. Very cool!

Imperial Java Stout
Brewery/Brand:
Santa Fe Brewing Co.
ABV: 8.0%

Serving Style: 12 oz. can
Description: This new offering into our market pours dark brown to black with some ruby highlights around the edges. The head is sturdy for a while, but will fade into a cap of espresso-style foam. The nose is full of dark-roasted coffee and roasted barley. Immediately, you know this beer is all about the coffee. The taste starts with an abundance of dark, bitter coffee. Nutty, dark chocolate comes in next with toffee, char and pine rounding out the end. The alcohol is well-hidden, as this doesn't taste at all like an 8-percent beer.

Overview: For an imperial stout, this is not as viscous as you'd think. It has a body and sweetness more akin to a milk stout. This beer is new to the market, so you may have some difficulty locating it at first. Don't let the can fool you—this is a great beer!

KCCO Black Lager
Brewery/Brand:
Resignation Brewery
ABV: 5.1%

Serving Style: 12 oz. bottle
Description: Another new addition to our market, this dark lager pours a nice-looking, dark-brown cola color with a good two fingers of frothy eggshell head. The nose has some pumpernickel-like breadiness to it, along with some Quik chocolate milk notes. The taste starts with some biscuit and coffee-like flavors. Earthy, dark fruits and toffee notes come next, with a hint of ash adding a little balance. Unsweetened chocolate and piney hops round out the back end, providing a fairly dry finish.

Overview: For a dark lager, this has a light/medium body. It's not a perfect example of the style by any means, but if you come across it and are looking to give your tongue a new challenge, definitely give it a whirl.

Cheers!

SLUG GAMES

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Presented by
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GALLERY STROLLS



Reimagine the natural world with Nancy Steele-Makasci's drawings at the *Finch Lane Gallery*.

Winter Hues: January's Gallery Stroll

By Mariah Mann Mellus
mariah@slugmag.com

It's easy to fall into a rut in January—that's probably why some overachiever began the ridiculous tradition of making New Year's resolutions. It's hard to stay motivated when the snow turns icy and brown and it gets dark before dinner, or when we've lost track of bad-air-quality days—all the more reason to get out and look at some art. For January's *Gallery Stroll*, go remind yourself that winter is a season and not a state of mind.

For a different hue this January, **Utah Division of Arts & Museums** hosts its 115th Statewide Annual Painting and Sculpture Competition at the *Rio Gallery*. From the far reaches of the state, 224 artists have submitted a total of 392 works in either medium. Jurors have meticulously pored over each submission and pared them down to 59 works by 59 artists, representing 44 cities across 18 counties. Awards are given for "Best in Show," juror honors and honorable mentions. "This competition and exhibition is an excellent representation of the exciting work Utah artists continue to produce," says Arts & Museums Director **Lynnette Hiskey**. The show opened on Nov. 21, but will remain on display until Jan. 9. The *Rio Gallery* is open Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. till 5 p.m., and is located at 300 S. Rio Grande Street.

While at the *Rio Gallery*, make sure you take a peep at the *Art-o-mat*, the brainchild of a North Carolina group known as **Artists in Cellophane**. The *Art-o-mat* repurposes old cigarette vending machines to dispense mini-masterpieces, which include ink drawings, jewelry, tiny robots and flip books. Utah Arts and Museums acquired the *Art-o-mat*

in April of 2014. It will remain on display until Spring of 2015, when it will become available to travel around the state. If you want the *Art-o-mat* for your organizations, business or events, contact the *Rio Gallery* for its availability.

The **Salt Lake Arts Council** will embrace the darkness of the season and show us the light in black and white. Two exhibits will share the *Finch Lane Gallery* space at 54 S. Finch Lane. In the "East Gallery," **Jena Schmidt's** exhibit, *Black North*, will feature her large-scale abstract paintings. In the "West Gallery," **Elise LaJeunesse, Nancy Steele-Makasci** and **Matthew Kruback** have joined forces for an exhibit titled *Remapping the Natural World in Black and White*. The show opens for the Jan. 16 *Gallery Stroll* and will remain up until Feb. 27, and a reception and artist talk with Schmidt will take place for the Feb. 20 *Gallery Stroll*.

Utah Arts Alliance invites you to jump down the rabbit hole and just leave this cold, dark reality behind. Their *Urban Arts Gallery* is transforming into Alice's Wonderland, complete with tea parties, live music and cosplay. The show includes artwork, installations and other mixed media by these fabulous artists: **Synthanropy Art Collective, Sailor Taylor** (aka **Taylor Millet**), **Maomi Sunshine, Timm Paxton, Lisa Mace, Bacee, Derek Dyer, Taylor Maguire, That Guy Gil, Jenn Blum, Greg Shearer, Stephanie Hillman, Torsten Bangerter, Jenny Kennedy** and more. The show runs until Feb. 15, but to get all the interactive activities, you should stop by during the *Gallery Stroll* reception on Jan. 16. The *Urban Arts Gallery* is located at 137 S. Rio Grande Street (at the *Gateway Center*).

Bundle up—a little cold and a lot of art does wonders for the soul, so go out and Stroll!

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Dear Orificer,

I'm pretty sure I know where you stand with the Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, etc. issue. I imagine that you are on the cops' (or security guards') sides in these matters. I am against the decisions to vindicate cops like Darren Wilson who, whether it was "justified" in the eyes of the law or not, killed people with firearms—or by other means, as with Eric Garner. I have a 19-year-old brother, who, in the eyes of the law may be an adult, but I know that he is still a kid who makes mistakes and is figuring "it all" out. Kids think they're invincible, and regardless of whether Michael Brown was as "Hulk Hogan"-esque as Darren Wilson made him out to be, he was still a kid; he's dead, and although my brother is by no means 6'4" or 292 lbs. or black, all I can see is someone's brother who was murdered. Here's my question: Why are cops still using weapons and tactics that kill people? Why not implement a weapon that stuns them without a potential for death? Humankind can land a probe on a fucking comet, but law enforcement can't figure out how to detain someone without taking their lives and ruining those of their families and uphold the peace they purport to defend?

-Lizardhand Gomorrah

P.S. After Trayvon Martin, if I were Michael Brown, I wouldn't have complied with Darren Wilson either. From Watts to Ferguson, the police have made it clear that they're to be considered an enemy—not one as blatant as ISIS, but a more nebulously insidious foe.

Mr. Lizard,

To answer your questions, #1 - Cops use weapons and tactics that "stop" people from their criminal intent; #2 - It's called a taser, and people still die after being tasered; #3 - Seriously, you're relating the scientific accomplishment of comet landing to natural, human, criminal-vs.-cop interaction? Idiot.

The rest of your sentiment I'll comment as follows, and you mentioned families:

Eric Tyrone Smith - End Of Watch July 7, 2013 - He was a twin. He was a United States Marine. He and his TWIN brother were raised by a special mother whom loved Eric A LOT. He was quite possibly one of the smartest cops to have existed on this planet, EVER. He had sons, Eric Smith Jr. and Quentin, who he loved more than life. So, where the FUCK were you (and Al Sharpton) and your diatribe when he was shot down, with his own gun, by some murdering criminal piece of shit?

And ...

Rodney Renee Thomas - End of Watch April 4, 2013 - He sang in his church choir. His passion for fishing was unequalled. He had a son, Rodney Thomas II. There was an accident one night, and he got out of his car and made sure everyone was OK. He even put on his reflective vest for safety. Some piece-of-shit criminal, driving a \$75,000 Porsche, ran him down. Where the FUCK were you or Al when this happened?

Cops die every day, and as the media likes to remind us, "You signed up for it." But, we are still people very similar to you, AND we will continue to sign up for it and die for it. It's who we are—male/female/black/white/brown/yellow/gay/straight/trans/gimpy/glass eye, whatever. Someday, when it sinks in, maybe you, too, can be one of us. Maybe.

-Cop

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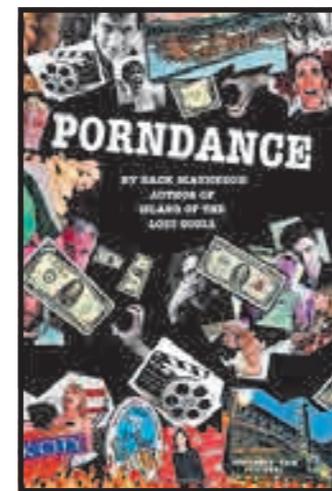
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BOOK REVIEWS

The Observable Characteristics of Organisms: Stories
Ryan MacDonald
FC2
Street: 09.30.14

The Observable Characteristics of Organisms is a collection of stories by Ryan MacDonald. The definition of stories was loosely draped in this context, as many of them seemed to be nothing more than half thoughts: a collection of dream-word soup missing too many handfuls of sentences to successfully deliver the punch line. This is perhaps why I found the anthology to be so interesting. I wouldn't ever suggest a cover-to-cover pass with this one. It should be digested like apple cider vinegar, a tablespoon a day, and the taste will grow on you. The stories are drenched in confusion and absurdity, with an almost lost subtext. My favorite story ended with a father expressing his being terribly jealous of a rhinoceros' trembling as she gives birth, wanting "to be a mother, if only to tremble, to feel the warmth of the creature leaving me." My only concern for the book is the notion that it may result in an increase of emergency calls from psychology aficionados convinced they're inside a David Lynch film, unable to escape. —Andrea Silva

Porndance
Zack Matheson
CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
Street: 10.17.14

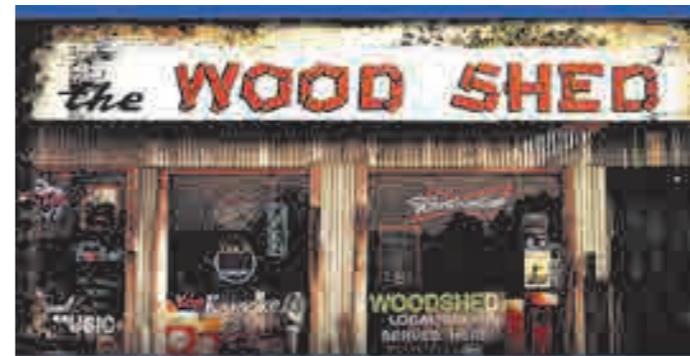


The book *Porndance* starts with a loving dedication to maniacs. This sets the tone long before the author has a chance to

speak. We already know that there's humor and that crazy shit will happen. The book is a fun-if-you're-nasty tale about gentleman and accomplished cook Daniel Quinn, who moves to Park City for a job that pays more than he's ever made before. Shenanigans commence, and this story becomes a blast to read. *Porndance* is a sequel to the *Island of Lost Souls*, but this is a brand new adventure for Quinn. The title is derived from a porn festival happening during a *Sundance Film Festival*, in the nearby town of Kamas. This event is organized by a friend of our hero and serves to be an elaborate joke on the upper-crusty *Sundance* goers. Author Zack Matheson has a firm grip on this story and keeps the jokes coming while never letting the story wander aimlessly. Matheson's characters are developed to the point where you feel as if he's writing about people he already knows, and Park City is explained in guide-like detail. There's a level of cynicism that creeps among the humorous situations, and since the narrator is talking about himself, you chuckle again because the story is just gosh-darn clever. I highly recommend it. —Benjamin Tilton

This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs The Climate
Naomi Klein
Simon & Schuster
Street: 09.16.14

Naomi Klein (*The Shock Doctrine*) provides a brilliant and well-researched explanation of the most important crisis to define the 21st Century: capitalism and its abhorrent effect on the Earth. Klein draws upon topics that are both controversial and enlightening to highlight road blocks to the profound changes needed to tackle this threat to our very existence. These road blocks come in the forms of the perpetuation of the free market ideology that emphasizes a for-profit system, the reckless policies of extractivism, such as fracking, and the failure of putting faith into billionaire messiahs like Richard Branson to properly address the issue, since they are tempered by their own bottom dollar. Rather, we need to radically rethink our relationship with the Earth and with each other. This is "decade zero," and how we continue to exist on this planet will be determined by our actions today. Though certainly a heavy subject, this book makes that perfectly clear a few pages in. It is well worth the read and essential to understanding what's going on. The struggle is here, so tune in, for dropping out is no longer an option. —Nick Kuzmack



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GAME REVIEWS



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The Collider
Shortbreak Studios
Reviewed on: Steam
Also On: PC, iOS, Android
Street: 09.15.14

The Collider is a very simple, fast-paced game with only one premise—do not collide with things. The controls are very basic: If you are on a computer, you move your mouse around to dodge things, and with a touch-screen device, you use your finger to dodge. When I first saw the trailer for this game, I was afraid that the mouse control would be too touchy, but I was very pleasantly surprised to find that the game doesn't punish you for moving the mouse off track. The game quickly becomes fast-paced, and if you are good at this style of gaming, you can finish it in 10–20 minutes. If you are horribly blind and jumpy like I am, the game will provide you hours of entertainment. I would recommend purchasing this game for your mobile phone instead of your computer because I can really see this being a great bathroom break game instead of a desktop game. The music is very fast-paced to match the game, and it also doesn't require you to invite friends to get bonuses or extra content, which I love. As a mobile game, I'd say it's worth it for \$2.99. —Nicole Stephenson

Dragon Age: Inquisition
Bioware/EA
Reviewed on: Xbox One
Also on: PS4, PS3, Xbox 360, PC
Street: 11.18.14

It might be the simplicity of jumping from quest to quest in such a massive game—or maybe how the game makes you feel like everything you are doing (or saying) is actually affecting the world. Maybe it's the strategy and

thought that goes into the composition of your character and party, or maybe it's just a combination of all of these elements. Whatever the case may be, *Dragon Age: Inquisition* is the deepest, most impressive RPG experience to grace consoles since the Dovahkiin trudged across the frosty *Skyrim* terrain. In it, you take on the role of the herald of Andraste, a savior of sorts that has the ability to close demonic rifts. From there, the story is seemingly up to you. How you go about saving a hopeless world, which characters assist you, and how much of a prick you are while doing it—everything is your call. While the slow-moving narrative—that really takes center stage over any action—may turn a certain section of gamers off, anyone who enjoys the genre (or the previous games) will bury themselves for hours—much like I have—in the vast, rich continent of Thedas. —Blake Leszczynski

Halo: Master Chief Collection
343 Industries/Microsoft/Bungie
Reviewed on: Xbox One (Exclusive)
Street: 11.11.14

343 and, to a certain extent, Microsoft botched this one badly. This space should have been reserved for effusive praise of this love letter to *Halo* fans, its beautifully remastered graphics, flawless presentation, and polished gameplay. Instead, I have to talk about how, in a week of trying to play multiplayer matches, at least one hour a day, I can honestly say I've only played one full match. That's embarrassing for everyone involved. *The Master Chief Collection* is more than multiplayer, no doubt, but I think it is safe to say that a lot of the people who plunked down their \$60 did so to at least jump into mul-



Just the friendly neighborhood dragon saying 'hello.'

tiplayer when they wanted to. That's just not the case, and what should have been the greatest re-release ever suffers greatly for it. On top of that, this was supposed to be Microsoft's chance to show off the Azure cloud's multiplayer gaming capabilities—a shame on all fronts. 343 and Microsoft will have a lot of work to do to satisfy the folks who already bought this, but I can't help but think that MCC's multiplayer population will never come close to what it could have been. —Blake Leszczynski

Lego Batman 3: Beyond Gotham
Traveller's Tales/Warner Bros. Interactive
Reviewed on: PS4
Also on: Xbox One, PS3, Xbox 360, Wii U, PC
Street: 11.11.14

Even for a hardened, story-driven gamer like myself, it's tough not to love the *Traveller's Tales* Lego games. For the third installment of their take on the Caped Crusader, a roster of 150 characters from all over the DC Universe are up for the unlocking, making this feel like less of a Batman-centered game and more of a riff on the Justice League of America—not that I'm complaining. One thing that these Lego games do extremely well is to offer engaging gameplay with surprisingly low stakes. Since dying isn't that big of a deal in *Lego Batman*, the player is encouraged to explore the painstaking, Lego-constructed world in search of different upgrades and unlockables. The game's challenge factor comes from using specific combinations of characters and their unique abilities to discover inaccessible areas and find ways to liberate TV's **Adam West**, who is

in some state of distress within each mission. The game's signature humor is everywhere—from the snarky cut-scenes to an excellent use of **Conan O'Brien**—and it's also a nerdy treat to have all of this superhero action take place to the original music of **Danny Elfman** and **John Williams**. —Alex Springer

World of Keflings
Ninjabe
Reviewed on: Wii U
Also on: Xbox Live Arcade, PC
Street: 11.13.14

World of Keflings is a city-building game that's quite charming. You play as your Mii, a giant among Keflings. Keflings are reminiscent of wooden marionettes, and they're about that size compared to your Mii. You wake up in the icy land of the Eskimo Keflings where the mayor needs some help building up the town. The Keflings are willing to be your minions in exchange—they'll mine resources, and transport them to the building of your choosing. Keflings level up as they work, making them more efficient. Resources can be refined as you construct complex buildings, which lead to more things you can manufacture. It gets a little confusing when you have to keep track of 20 or more minions who will randomly start piling up resources in the middle of the map instead of their designated building. There are a few visual glitches as well: The Kefling that started up a conversation wouldn't be on the screen, an occasional minion would disappear when they leveled up, and only a starry imprint with the level-up icon remained. Despite those minor bugs, it's still fun to help build many a kingdom with the quirky Keflings in their bright, colorful worlds. —Ashley Lippert

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2 PRODUCT REVIEWS

COLDCOCK American Herbal Flavored Whiskey

coldcockwhiskey.com

From the name alone, my expectations of this whiskey—whose brand is co-founded by **Slayer's Kerry King**—were low. Although “coldcock” implies that this product will knock you out, in the context of heavy drinking, the name reflects similar phrases such as “flaccid penis” or, more crudely, “whiskey dick.” This is funny, because it starkly contrasts with the brand’s aggressively macho and douche promotional campaign, as found on their website. They feature sponsored music videos, such as the horrific **Upon a Burning Body** and **Ice-T** cover of “Turn Down for What.” It’s like in *30 Rock* when Jack Donaghy hires **Ghostface Killah** to endorse his foul-tasting Donaghy Estates wine, except this whiskey is for real and these guys are serious. Oh, yeah, about the whiskey: It’s awful. According to their website, COLDCOCK is “a three-year aged American bourbon blended with a variety of herbs, including green tea, hibiscus, ginger, eucalyptus, cinnamon and ginko.” In a sipping taste test alongside Underground Herbal Spirit and Fernet Branca, COLDCOCK has very minimal herbal notes and is cloyingly sweet with hints of honey and sweet vermouth. The brand’s slogan is “Take Your Shot,” so I figured I should try it that way. Shooting two ounces of the 70-proof swill was like drinking a mouthful of simple syrup. I shuddered with disgust, but the sickness didn’t stop there. Upon going to bed, I was plagued with an uncharacteristic series of night terrors and fever dreams all night long, which I blame entirely on COLDCOCK. Stay away. —Cody Kirkland

Generic Surplus Cutty Sark x Generic Surplus Hi-Top

genericsurplus.com

Just like their smooth Scotch whiskey, Cutty Sark—and Generic Surplus—have introduced a shoe that takes on the casual zero fucks of Chuck Taylors and made them smooth and sexy. The shoe has the build of Converse All-Stars, but with water-resistant leather that lends it a sleek je ne sais quoi for

(mildly) reformed punx like me. The off-white (dare I say crême?) laces and eyelets—save the top two yellow ones—give this stock pair of kicks some flavor, and help match a mostly black outfit with brown-leather jackets. These sneaks boast yellow, vulcanized leather soles, which are the selling point to market this product toward bartenders, who need to maintain a grip on a potentially wet floor as they hurry to mix cocktails, hence the off-white laces and water-resistant leather. Making cocktails at home (I’m messy) and riding my bicycle has tested their grip, and the soles have passed with flying colors. Unlike Cutty Sark, however, these shoes are expensive, and I don’t think that they’re quite worth the \$150 pre-order price that Generic Surplus is asking. If you’re the doll of the dance at the bar and receive a surplus of tips, get these, but you’re likely \$50 away from a pair of nicer, high-quality boots that may catch the eye of your future trust-fund-baby lover. —Salamander Horchata

JamHub Tour Bus Studio

jamhub.com

The JamHub is essentially a musician’s dream, as this single device records multiple players/singers into a single device, where everyone can tune into each other at their own volumes over headphones and record a perfect live session together. The Tour Bus model features seven positions (six musicians and a producer setup), allowing full control over any recording. The unintentional bonus to the system is that it can be utilized for podcasting as well, as each station is a private mic/headphone jack with the option of tuning in your fellow panelists without ruining a recording. The drawback to the JamHub is the connectivity. In two podcast recordings and two live-recording sessions with bands, there was no way to transfer the audio live using the USB connection on the back, even with the internal software running. That means you have to record on just the Hub at first and hope that recording went smoothly when it’s transferred to whatever audio program you’re using. Another setback: It didn’t come with the USB cable needed to hook it up to begin with, leaving you searching for one if you want to experiment without the memory card. It is an amazing product

for musicians and podcasters to utilize, but it’s just a couple options shy of being perfect. —Gavin Sheehan

JimmyCASE iPhone 5 Wallet Case

thejimmycase.com



There are a lot of phone cases on the market that double as a wallet so you can keep your ID, cash and essential cards on you at all times. Some are bulky, many are cheesy, not to mention the ones that let your stuff slip out or are loose and easily stolen because—to be blunt, no one knows how to keep a phone in a pocket anymore. The designers at JimmyCASE have worked to remedy that situation with their line of covers. The backing is made of mahogany, with a tightly-woven pocket on the back to hold six plastic cards with ease. Inside, a layer of silicone handles well with accidental dropping, but like most cases, you shouldn’t test its limits—who slams a phone down a full speed to test the case, anyway? You get a decent selection of color patterns with whatever phone you have, so even if you don’t use the option on the back you can at least find something that fits your style. Overall, JimmyCASE is a fine minimalist version of these type of cases. —Gavin Sheehan

Unified Computer Intelligence Corporation Ubi



theubi.com

The Ubi (\$299) is a small, stationary device that controls your smart home devices (Nest, WeMo, Smart Things, etc.), and can send texts and emails, provide answers to simple questions and play music via voice requests. The system’s integration with smart home devices was fine, but since Ubi only has their mobile app available for Android at the moment, there’s no way for iOS users to utilize the Ubi’s services once they’re out of voice range from the device—which is disappointing. As for the texting and email options, it seems like they’re still in the beta stages (think of what auto correct does to your texting, then imagine not being able to see what auto correct had done before you hit send—not pretty). Setting alarms and reminders with the device also proved troublesome, as most of the time Ubi would just say, “Reminder, alarm going off,” so it becomes as useful as a Remembrall. Asking Ubi questions and having it play music was somewhat entertaining, though the voice recognition isn’t perfect (**Yeezy** is not and never will be **The Cure**, Ubi). The potential for what is possible in terms of home automation and the interconnectivity of everything with the Ubi is clear—the future will most certainly be a super rad place to be—but for now, the Ubi still has some kinks to work out. —John Ford

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MOVIE REVIEWS

Annie
Director: Will Gluck
Sony
In Theaters: 12.19.14

Upon hearing that **Will Smith** and **Jay Z** were producing a cinematic remake to the 1982 musical *Annie* with **Willow Smith** (Will's daughter) as the lead, expectations were miniscule, to say the least. However, when **Quvenzhané Wallis**—star of 2012's *Beasts of the Southern Wild*—signed on, the sun came out from behind those dreadful clouds. The story follows foster child (not orphan) Annie (Wallis) as she becomes a media stunt for New York billionaire Will Stacks (**Jamie Foxx**) as he campaigns for mayor and attempts to charm his way into the office. As the play appears to be working, the two form a bond that may not be as bogus as the scheme they're pulling on the voters. Memorable musical numbers such as "Tomorrow" and "It's the Hard Knock Life" get the bass-induced remixes thanks to Mr. Z, but it's in the downtime moments that this film finds its true heart and soul. Wallis and Foxx share an authentic father-daughter chemistry in between songs, but the amateurish choreography appears to be too much for the child star and her young peers. If I can ask the world for one favor, it's to never have to listen to **Cameron Diaz** sing another note. That'd be delightful. On the other hand, director Will Gluck has definitely improved his craft and sense of humor since his first feature, *Fired Up!*, which I have credited as the nastiest review I have ever written, and deservedly so. —*Jimmy Martin*

The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies
Director: Peter Jackson
Warner Bros.
In Theaters: 12.17.14

It's been 13 years since director Peter Jackson brought audiences into his version of Middle Earth with the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Once those were completed, it was nine years later when he released the first of three films that adapted **J.R.R. Tolkien's** prequel to the former stories. Now, we have reached the conclusion of Jackson's journey with hobbits, orcs,

dwarves and elves with *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies*. We pick up precisely where the second cliff-hanger concluded with the dragon, Smaug, laying waste to Laketown in a fiery attack. Without giving too much away, the majority of the film is dragon-less, and the spotlight is set on the dwarves as Thorin Oakenshield (**Richard Armitage**) copes with the acquisition of his castle, but must immediately defend it as word spreads of the mountainous fortunes residing in his palace. While many Tolkien fanatics despise Jackson's additions to the storyline, for someone who has never read the source material, I quite enjoyed the inclusion of Legolas (**Orlando Bloom**) and Tauriel (**Evangeline Lilly**). In fact, they add the greatest elements to the action sequences. **Martin Freeman** as Bilbo Baggins has been a delight since the first foot was set forward, and the tradition continues to the end credits. Jackson leaves Middle Earth on a high note with a stunning battle that embodies the majority of the film. —*Jimmy Martin*

Into the Woods
Director: Rob Marshall
Disney
In Theaters: 12.25.14

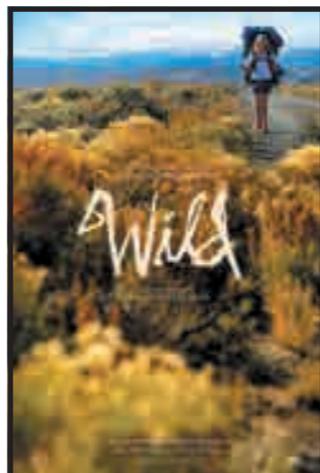
This critic is a sucker for musicals. There's something special about hearing catchy show tunes on a stage or in a movie theater and immediately singing them in the car on the way home. However, such is not the case with **Stephen Sondheim** and **James Lapine's** Broadway show, brought to the screen by director Rob Marshall. The story follows a baker (**James Corden**) and his wife (**Emily Blunt**) as they attempt to complete the tasks given to them by a witch (**Meryl Streep**) in order to lift a curse that has been keeping them from being able to conceive a child. Along the journey, a clutter of fairy tale characters impact the outcome, including Cinderella (**Anna Kendrick**), Prince Charming (**Chris Pine**), Red Riding Hood (**Lilla Crawford**), The Wolf (**Johnny Depp**) and Jack (**Daniel Huttlestone**) with his magical beans. While the theatrical stage-play elements with costuming and set designs are inviting, Sondheim's musical components are not. As the end credits scrolled down,

I could barely recollect one worthwhile musical number. Marshall is no stranger to the musical universe (his adaptation of *Chicago* won Best Picture in 2003) and delivers superb performances from the ensemble cast, but this musical execution is far from that caliber of greatness. —*Jimmy Martin*

Top Five
Director: Chris Rock
Paramount
In Theaters: 12.12.14

It's been far too long since we've seen Chris Rock be funny on the big screen. Sure, the checks he's cashed from **Adam Sandler's** cinematic catastrophes clear at the bank, but this was once one of the funniest comedians on the circuit. To this day, he is still my favorite host of the Academy Awards because he gave that room of celebrities exactly what they deserved: the truth. As you can imagine, it's great to see Rock step away from the Happy Madison atrocities and sink his teeth into this passion project in which he directed, wrote and produced. Essentially, Rock plays a characterized version of himself named Andre Allen, who is currently promoting his latest dramatic role when all anybody wants is their once entertaining comedian. Enter journalist Chelsea Brown (**Rosario Dawson**), who wants to write an honest profile piece on Andre and begins by asking him why he isn't funny anymore. Ouch. Rock walks a fine line between reality and fiction as he delves into hysterical stories of his former days as a stand-up comedian and introduces Chelsea—and the audience—to his real friends. It's obvious that Rock made a favor call to all of his comedian pals—and it's good that he did. Witnessing **Jerry Seinfeld** make it rain in a sketchy strip club was absolutely priceless. Rock reignites his inner hilarity by breaking free of clichéd family comedies and reminds us of the comedic golden gun he can still shoot like a skilled marksman. —*Jimmy Martin*

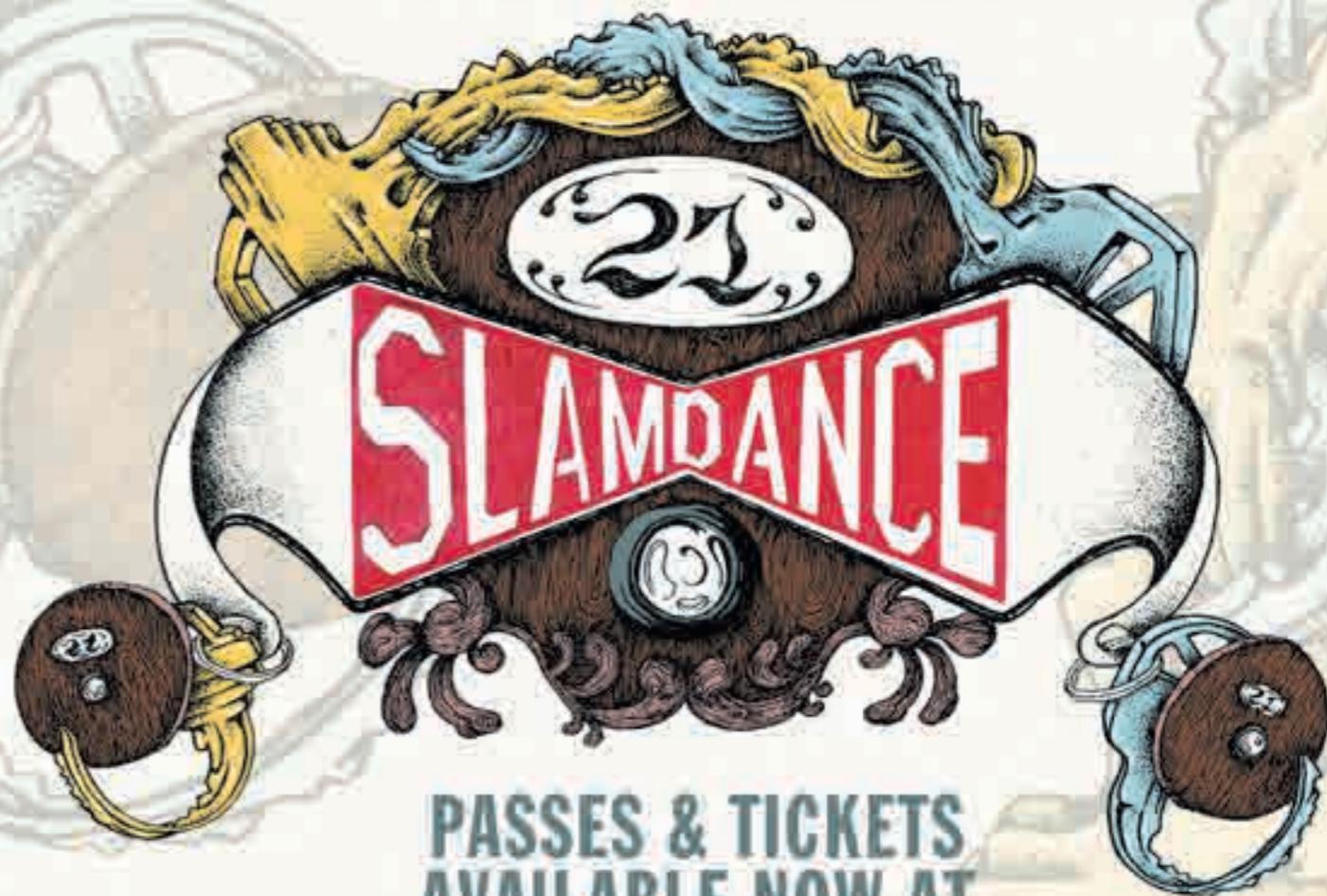
Wild
Director: Jean-Marc Vallée
Fox Searchlight
In Theaters: 12.05.14



It seems like only yesterday that **Reese Witherspoon** was the innocent teenager in films like *Fear* and *Cruel Intentions*. It's crazy what almost two decades and a Best Actress Oscar can do to someone's career. In this tale of rejuvenation and self-realization, Witherspoon portrays the real-life **Cheryl Strayed** as she decides to hike 1,100 miles on the Pacific Crest Trail after a tragic event brings her crumbling life into perspective. Witherspoon sheds more than her makeup in this daring role that leaves her vulnerable to the elements of man and Mother Nature. Director Jean-Marc Vallée successfully completes the task of turning a story of a dysfunctional woman walking alone—which could easily collapse into a monotonous expedition—into an engaging and humorous story of redemption, and, with the help of cinematographer **Yves Bélanger**, he captures the ever-changing colorful beauty of the Pacific Coast's rural regions. As Cheryl takes one step after another, she comes across a slew of unique individuals that either reaffirm her trust in mankind or make her weep for the future. Witherspoon offers yet another award-worthy performance that is sure to garner the attention of multiple ceremonies, and I wouldn't be surprised if she needed to clear some room on the mantle for what's to come. —*Jimmy Martin*

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LOCAL MUSIC REVIEWS

Cowboyboy

EP

Self-Released

Street: 10.24.14

Cowboyboy = Conquer Monster + Anamanaguchi



The album opens with a track that sounds like static on a television before clearly becoming a constant of reverb from an electric guitar. The music is good, but the distortion becomes a little bit distracting and takes away from the listening experience because, well, it's sort of like nails on a chalkboard. This Salt Lake-based artist has a really good idea, as the music is cool and unlike anything I hear often—combining elements of glitchy electronic and the rock-band starter kit—insert guitars, keyboard and drum set here. The best tracks on the EP were “Orlando” and “Skank,” which demonstrate the instrument combination really well. Check out this album—it’s something new and fun! —*Julia Sachs*

Critical Emu

Wristbands Make You Look Stupid...

Self-Released

Street: 11.02.14

Critical Emu = Bassnectar + The Glitch Mob

Critical Emu’s Bandcamp description of the album reads, “a concept album about a bunch of college students trying to make it in the South Bay area of California.” In a generation that values bottle service and VIP wristbands over a good conversation or quality experience, I can see how this album is a remark on Bay Area

culture—or just youth culture in general. The album opens with an up-tempo electronic song titled “Silicon Valley,” which weaves in between an obnoxious cowbell sound and dubstep remixes of a woman screaming. The rest of the album follows suit, making a negative remark on some aspect of California culture or prominent figures such as **Steve Jobs**. The album is worth a listen—just to hear what the group has to say and can be found at valentineandtheregard.bandcamp.com. —*Julia Sachs*

Deathhead

Blessed in Blasphemy

Self-Released

Street: 07.18.14

Deathhead = Sodom + Kreator + Sepultura

I’m sure Deathhead don’t quite want to be known for a small rukus over a T-shirt they made that had “At Least I’m Not Mormon” on it, but I do think it did get them banned from playing a venue or two. The Ogden thrash trio self-produce their stuff. The sound on the album comes off as a bit tin-like and almost feels as if when a solo plays, it’s played far off in the distance. I like the DIY production, as it gives the album the old-school panache. The songs have that raw, dirty feel, like listening to some old, obscure ’80s thrash cassette tape. “The Thing in the Dark” is a damn cool song, and as the album progresses, the speed lets up, and there’s some cool bass-jam-styled tracks. *Blessed in Blasphemy* stands solid and the possibilities of the live show’s sound make me want to get off my ass and make it to a gig. —*Bryer Wharton*

Farewell, Nick Wan

Dainty

Self-Released

Street: 10.28.14

Farewell, Nick Wan = Anamanaguchi + Ratatat

The immediate imagery that comes to mind when I see the word dainty is little doilies in pastel colors or miniature trinkets like Polly Pocket dolls. Similarly, the word dainty creates an image of something being easily breakable or fragile, and I think this is the perfect name for this album. Though the production is good, each song lacks

something, as if the artist was afraid of overdoing it to the point where it compromised the sound. The music style has the potential to be something fantastic, but the dainty approach to the album resulted in a lack of being anything memorable. Highlights include “King Creep,” “Still Afraid” and “By Accident.” I would keep an eye on this artist because there is talent there, but the album as a whole was mediocre at best. —*Julia Sachs*

Fossil Arms

Only Ever Have Nightmares

When I’m Ill

Self-Released

Street: 10.17.14

Fossil Arms = New Order + Ian Curtis



If Salt Lake City can claim its own musical **John Hughes**, it’d be **Chaz Costello**—he’s adept at creating an inclusive, fist-to-the-sky experience in any band that he’s in. Fossil Arms, Costello’s darkwave synth n’ bass project, with the equally stellar **Melody Maglione**, has been a thrilling presence in Salt Lake for years now, and are probably “thee” band that finally got all of your punk friends to accept a goth lifestyle. *Only Ever Have Nightmares When I’m Ill* contains songs that have been punctuating Fossil Arms’ performances for over a year, and they now exist in physical cassette form—with help from Diabolical Records—and digitally, on fossilarmsnoise.bandcamp.com. The tape’s seven tracks comprise the same drama of a Fossil Arms performance, albeit without the veil of flowers attached to the mic that Costello typically sings from, or the duo’s occasional equipment malfunc-

tions. Take the album’s closer, “Black & White,” for example: Costello’s processed vocals and chorus-laden bass merges with Maglione’s steady drum machine and post-punk flavored keyboards—it’s a well-polished, absorbing listen. Put on your **Robert Smith**—red lipstick, your favorite jean jacket and goth all the way with Fossil Arms. —*Christian Schultz*

I’m Designer

Lulled from Reality

Self-Released

Street: 09.22.14

I’m Designer =

Alarms and Controls +

30 Seconds to Mars +

A Perfect Circle

When a band titles a track “First Gasp During Sexual Assault,” you wonder just what the fuck you’ve gotten yourself into. But titles are just titles, and deception seems to be I’m Designer’s MO. They seem simple, but multiple listens reveal depth. At first, I heard a basic mix of atmospheric guitar work, steady drums and melodic vocals. My interest piqued, I dug deeper and noticed the weight of the cool, echoing reverb as they nod to **Queens of the Stone Age** and **Them Crooked Vultures**. I heard a universe of familiar sounds executed with originality and silver-coated production. I noticed the journey that a single song can take as it straddles psychedelia with a light touch of emo, or hard rock with a side of pop. I traveled along as they jam, croon, holler and launch to the moon and beyond. *Lulled* is a solid release from a great up-and-comer. —*CJ Morgan*

Iridia

Cognition

Self-Released

Street: 10.10.14

Iridia = Peter Murphy + Tool

+ Alice in Chains

Rock has stumbled a bit recently with its identity, so it was welcoming to hear the straightforward thrashing of Iridia’s debut album, *Cognition*. The album itself is almost a walk from ’80s metal to the modern death metal just before 2010. You can even hear the building transitions through the years in song after song. For those of you sick of



keyboards and bands requiring dual male/female singers, this is your bag, baby, and I suggest you fill up. A good first listen would be “From Me to You.” The CD hardcopy even has a hidden 11th track, completing my geeky love for the genre. These boys work hard at promoting themselves, and the fan response from shows has been excellent. For the disillusioned hard rockers out there, I highly recommend this tuneage—please go check these boys out locally and support local, kick-ass rock! —*Benjamin Tilton*

Kitfox

Where We Were

Self-Released

Street: 10.24.14

Kitfox = Straylight Run +

Gardiner Sisters



At peak season for icy air and cold noses comes this warm, wholesome debut EP from Kitfox. It’s a quiet, somber five songs, but Kitfox certainly found their sweet spot early in their career with careful acoustic cross-picking, piano, sleepy banjo and the occasional, lightly processed electric guitar. The melodies are very balanced and tonally exact (particularly on “Where We Were”), and the musicianship is really fantastic. It’s a short EP, but highlights range from drowsy heartfelt numbers like “Sleep” to mid-tempo nostalgic ones like “Halloween Song” and sweet romantic tracks like “Wild Grass.” There’s really nothing here to dislike, and they’re every bit as talented as, if not more talented than, many national acts you’re likely to find in the indie folk genre. They’re a young band, but they sound far more mature than some acts

that have been around for far longer. I expect more great things from Kitfox. —*CJ Morgan*

Max Pain and the Groovies

Electro Cosmic

Psych Lake City Records

Street: 12.31.14

Max Pain and the Groovies =

The Growlers +

The Black Angels

I first saw Max Pain and the Groovies in 2010 at *Kilby Court*. I forgot who headlined because Max P. and the boys definitely stole the show. Since then, they’ve been jamming harder, as their debut full-length album, *Electro Cosmic*, was released this past New Year’s Eve—it’s a game changer. Much like their self-titled EP in 2013, *Electro Cosmic* is a cohesive, high-energy set from start to finish, but with 12 tracks, it’s three times as good. Here, psychedelic garage rock is taken to a new level: The boys go a littler harder, with the confidence to loosen up and let the reverb and mysticism flow. The interludes are undeniably groovier than before—even the song titles give it away: “Electro Cosmic Chronic Jam.” If you’re looking for a way to kick off 2015 the right way, don’t miss out on one of the best albums of the year. —*Lizz Corrigan*

MiNX

Together Forever

Self-Released

Street: 10.31.14

MiNX = Blondie +

Phantogram



Together Forever follows a fairly standard formula (house beats, killer guitar riffs, electronic soundscapes), and the lyrics are rarely more than repetitive and simple (the big exception being the spoken-word highlight “Five”). Ultimately, though, MiNX are a multimedia band—an ambitious one. If the music alone feels like it’s missing something, that’s because it is. *Together Forever* is an album built as the soundtrack to a silent film by the same name. The story hinted at in the album opens wide when cast alongside the film. Funky, danceable numbers like “Three,” and

“Six,” really come to life. Though the album grows a little stale toward the end, it stays fresh throughout when accompanied by the visuals. Still, I’d rather this album stand a little stronger by itself, but perhaps the two forms were meant to be together ... er ... forever. View the silent film *Together Forever* at MiNXband.com. —*CJ Morgan*

Mooninite

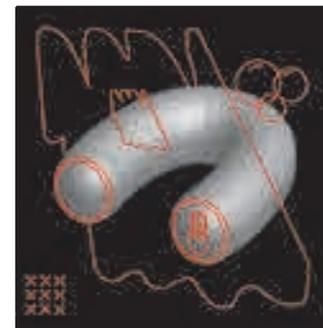
Soda

Hel Audio

Street: 11.08.14

Mooninite = Critical Emu +

VCR5 + SOPHIE



Ah, yet another statement album, this one apparently about soft drinks. Mooninite combines synthesized down-tempo electronic beats with robotic vocals for a sound similar to something you would hear in a video game, but I wouldn’t quite call it chiptune. The album artwork reminds me of statement artist SOPHIE who premiered a similar style and vibe at the SXSW 2014 festival in Austin, Texas. What I like about this album is that it combines nontraditional sounds in each track to go with the overall concept of the album—which is, in this case, soda. The artist remixes the sounds of soda cans being opened and other similar noises that make the album sound bubbly and sweet but robotic as if it were all held together by metal—a can of soda. Highlights of the album include “Lemon Lime” and “Blue Hawaii.” The album is available for digital download or cassette on the Hel Audio website: helaudio.org. —*Julia Sachs*

The No-Nation Orchestra

Coil EP

Self-Released

Street: 11.14.14

The No-Nation Orchestra =

Antibalas + Fela Kuti +

The Budos Band

The No-Nation Orchestra is a diasporic take on funk, jazz and various types of non-Western music flying beneath afrobeat’s all-encompassing flag. As the group’s name suggests, this type of loose confederation of non-geographi-



cally bound musical modes and styles has pooled and sunk into one of the most unlikely places to host such cosmopolitan influences. Does a city get on the map by housing a sprawling orchestra playing straight-up authentic cuts off of Fela Kuti’s **Afrika ’70** band or matching a sitar drone with a punchy bass line and a big, bright brass section? Salt Lake City is now on that map, but that map does not exist because there are no maps because there are no nations—just ideas, and ideas flourish where there is water and sunlight, which SLC has in spades. I pledge allegiance to No-Nation. —*Ryan Hall*

The Piano Guys

Wonders

Portrait

Street: 08.25.14

The Piano Guys = Richard Clayderman – Yanni

With an uninspired and cloying musicality that makes one wish for a **John Tesh** comeback, local duo **Jon Schmidt** (the pianist, as in singular) and cohort, cellist **Steven Sharp Nelson**, present their moniker as though they’re a group. It’s a small point, but when creating little more than cover versions (under the guise of “mash-ups”), how many people does it really take? Blame YouTube for making them popular—where anyone talented or otherwise can be a star, at least to themselves—but that doesn’t make their dreck any more palatable. Worse are their treachy videos, included with the “Deluxe Edition” of the album. It’s bad enough that they made a cover of *Frozen*’s “Let It Go” to begin with, but do we really need to see their serious “musician” faces too? At least the snowy caverns that surround them reminded me of the maze scene from **Stanley Kubrik**’s *The Shining*. —*Dean O Hillis*

Robyn Cage

Tales Of A Thief /

Burning Now

Self-Released

Street: 09.25.14

(Tales of a Thief)

09.03.14 (Burning Now)

Robyn Cage =

(Florence + the Machine) + Lana Del Rey – Fiona Apple

It is always nice to hear a local musician sound so polished and professional. While not possessing the strongest of voices (its thinness—à la Del Rey—sounds too overdubbed in parts to compensate for what it lacks), Cage's isn't an unpleasant one. Opener and lead single "Burning Now" (the separate, three-track release of which features an acoustic take plus an enjoyable lo-fi remix of the song by Park City's **The Planetaries**) sounds quite different than the rest of the material and is more intriguing musically, with a clear electronica vibe absent from the rest of *Tales'* six tracks. Co-credited to and produced by **Darryl Neudorf (Neko Case, Sarah McLachlan)**, it is a direction that suits Cage better than the stage show musical-cum-reality TV music series numbers that make up those others. Clichéd lyrics—not helped by her music—abound, but fortunately, the exception is the solid and straightforward "If You Don't Try." —Dean O Hillis

Selja Sini

Back Home
Self-Released
Street: 09.26.14
Selja Sini = Cate Le Bon + Rilo Kiley

Selja Sini is a local husband-and-wife duo and power couple. **Selja Felin Engar** of Finland and **Brett Engar** of Utah created this indie-folk EP, *Back Home*: six tracks beautifully composed with the ukulele, percussion and a hint of electric fringe—everything as soft as the hum of Selja's voice. Each track surpasses the next, dancing through moments of hope and reverie. Slower tempos and wondrous, transfixing songs and upbeat tracks like "We Ran" affirm the epic tragedy of this album: There are only six tracks. —Lizz Corrigan

Simply B

The Candelaria Session
Self-Released
Street: 09.21.14
Simply B = Jack Johnson + Django Reinhardt + looping fun

The insanely talented **Brandon "B" Barker** is at it again, this time releasing a quick, four-song EP of material from his solo, multi-instrumental looping-project, *Simply B*. The recordings are a lot of fun, but with a project like this, the experience of watching the artist set up the loops and do everything himself is a major part of the awesomeness. Happily, B and his team filmed the whole session (the recording of all four tracks) to demonstrate, firsthand, what kind of magic was happening in the studio. I recommend watching the vids to get the appropriate appreciation for the

art form, and then pop that disc in any-time you need a reminder that humans are awesome. Rock on, B—one more feather in the cap! —Ischa B.

Storms

Critter
Self-Released
Street: 09.23.14
STORMS = Motörhead + Pink Floyd + Mudvayne

If you're looking for a metal/nü metal hybrid with aspirations of psych rock, I suggest you look no further. *Critter* by Storms is an elaborate concoction that never commits to any identity. If you think you've pegged them at first listen, don't be upset when they become something else a minute later. The song "Beast Mode" will have you jumping and punching with excitement, and the lyrics behind "Navigator" might cause you to stare at the wall and rethink some things. By the time you reach "The Zephyr," you'll feel like the evil mountain sequence of *Fantasia* is over and slip into melancholy only rivaled by the liberal use of Benadryl. "Sea Legs" shows off the band's musical talent, as it offers up all the diversity of the previous tunes in one sexy bundle. The members of Storms offer an excellent and creative EP with *Critter*, and I suggest the journey to anyone. —Benjamin Tilton

Valentine & The Regard
Manchester Misery
Self-Released
Street: 04.04.14
Valentine & The Regard = Simon & Garfunkel / Bright Eyes



Manchester Misery is quite the perplexing album for a few reasons. It's a fairly difficult listen considering that it consists of acoustic folk and soft ballads, which should be relatively easy listening. It may be the spoken word pieces that end and begin the album or the vocals' striking resemblance to emotional junkie **Conor Oberst**, but *Manchester Misery* feels like it's trying to be something bigger than it is. There's depth, emotion and traces of great folk artists in the

songs, but the music sounds a bit premature. It's difficult to say what aspects the band can further develop or add, but I'm hopeful the growth will be evident in future albums.—Justin Gallegos

Valerie Rose Sterrett
Monstera
Swoody
Street: 10.31.14
Valerie Rose Sterrett = She & Him x The Pierces / Alpine

Opening with a combination of piano, waves and what presumably is a breeze, I was quickly given a brief glimpse into how I would spend my next 40 minutes—confused as fuck. First thing, this album isn't necessarily bad. However, it lacks any kind of musical consistency—it tries to span too many different genres in too short a time. The album ranges from folksy, to goth-pop, to something kind of industrial-sounding and then back to some kind of **Katey Sagal-meets-Zoey Deschanel-meets-Grace Slick** clusterfuck of a song, with intermittent instrumental breaks laden with seemingly nonsensical samples. I'm not sure if this was an attempt at a concept album that just went way over my head, or if Sterrett just has musical ADHD, but this album left a lot to be desired. Next time, please find a sound and stick to it. —Allison Shephard

Various Artists
Almost Live
Junction City Records
Street: 09.19.14
Junction City Bands = Descendents + (Rancid x Operation Ivy) + (Sonic Youth x Black Flag's The Process of Weeding Out)

I have to admit, when I think of Ogden, Utah, the term "music capital" doesn't exactly come to mind. However, underground indie label Junction City Records has promoted some pretty diverse and badass bands from Ogden's so-called "underbelly." **Jail City Rockers** and **The Dirt Nappers** hit the speakers with three-part harmonies thrown in with some rockabilly twang, making them the most danceable bands on the disc. **Hi-Fi Murder** and **Tainted Halos** call back to the '80s with heavier riffs, faster tempos and more raucous vocals. **Fried Arm's** sound supplements the use of distorted vocals and atonal guitar riffs, emoting a mix of post-punk and garage rock. We end with the dance-inducing rhythms of **The Two-Bit Band**, whose blend of two-tone ska and punk rock gives listeners one last chance to "get their skank on." With such an array of punk rock subgenres, this compilation does justice to Ogden's underground music scene. —Eric U. Norris

Various Artists

City of Dis Compilation
City of Dis
Street: 11.11.14
City of Dis = Charles Bronson + Anal Cunt + Disfortune

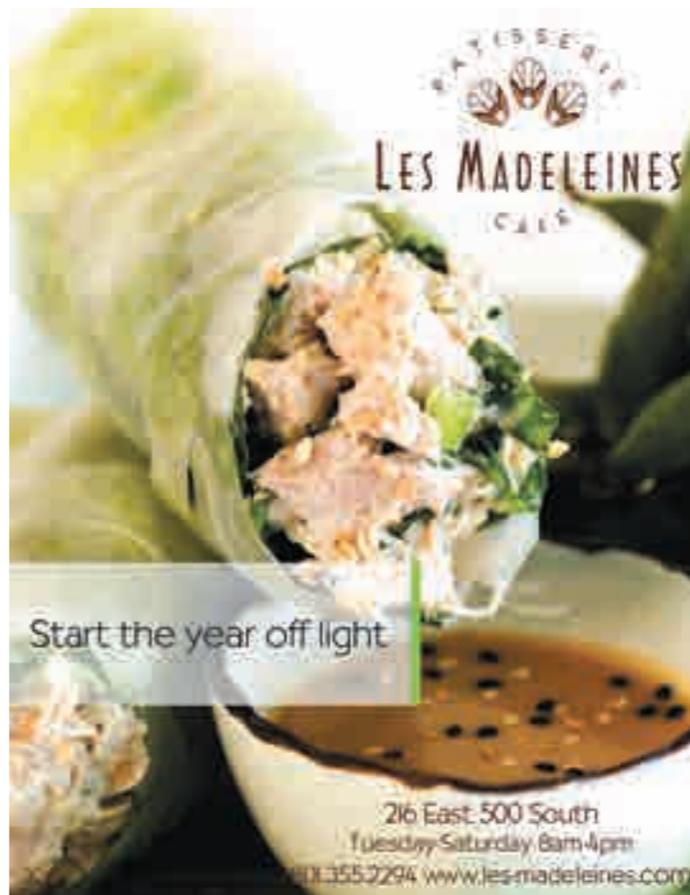
This waste of magnetic tape is a bombardment of awful, ugly, crappy noise. It was probably recorded in somebody's basement. Also, why are most of the bands named after a movie star or a character? **Bill Murray** would be so appalled that his name is being used for a band that sounds like a bag of hammers being thrown into a wood chipper, though **Steve Buscemi** might be flattered. Shit, I can really only pull the sarcasm so far—"shitty" as the bands that make up the *City of Dis* sound are, it's some fanciful noise to be taken with a grain of salt. The fact is that the bands on *City of Dis* create violent noise for themselves over anything and do it on a budget of beer and Top Ramen. Much as one may think it's silly, it's something whose existence in SLC one should be glad about. —Bryer Wharton

Visigoth

The Revenant King
Metal Blade Records
Street: 01.27
Visigoth = Icarus Witch + Hammerfall + Manilla Road

Utah's own heavy metal staple return with their first full-length album—released on none other than Metal Blade Records. **Lee Campana** and **Jamison Palmer** use their axes like master warriors, hacking out classic-assed riffs and melodic solos like camps of unsuspecting enemies while bassist **Matthew Brotherton** and drummer **Mikey T.** hold down the rhythms steadily and skillfully. The songs are dynamic and ensure that the catchy choruses linger in your mind—with one exception: The track running times never fall below the five-minute mark, making me want to take a drill to my brain à la *Pt* so I stop waking up with "Blood Sacrifice" on repeat in my head. Those familiar with their other releases will hear polished renditions of older songs, such as "Creature of Desire" and the proclamatory "Iron Brotherhood." I'm particularly impressed with the increased, raw emotion that vocalist **Jake Rogers** exhibits on this album. Classic metal purists and basement-dwelling D&D nerds alike are going to need emergency stockpiles of tissues and lotion for this one. If *Magic: The Gathering* had a soundtrack, this would be it. —Alex Coulombe

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MUSIC REVIEWS

Acid Baby Jesus
Selected Recordings
Slovenly Recordings
Street: 11.18.14
Acid Baby Jesus =
Brian Jonestown Massacre
+ Fuzz – Nana Mouskouri



If the ancient Greeks had invented psych-rock up there on Mount Olympus, the gods would've found this stuff pretty far out. The band is named partly after another "long-haired hippy" who wouldn't come till a few centuries after. Songs like "Diogenes" and "Night of Pan" are odes to the Greeks of old by a new generation of Greeks. These songs have a Mediterranean musical influence, which is somewhat stately and seductive—like a Greek dance. Beginning long and languorous, these songs hypnotically weave themselves into your mind. The album was recorded on a secluded island in the region, and the sound could be miles away or as much as eons. Yet, it's right in place in the current psychedelic resurgence, flavored by various interpreters of the genre all over the world. It's a great introduction into the cult of psychedelic mysteries—music-wise. —*Stakerized!*

Aphex Twin
Syro
Warp
Street: 09.19.14
Aphex Twin =
Polygon Window +
Conjure One

Syro is the sequel to Aphex Twin's 2001 masterpiece *Drukqs*. I remember friends in high school throwing tantrums about how it was "just a bunch of random bleeps and bloops" before ironically ejecting the CD



to listen to **Radiohead's** *Kid A* for the millionth time. Newcomers may find *Syro* a little more accessible—the beats are more discernable and easier to follow. Fortunately, it retains **Richard D. James'** unmistakable, signature quirky genius. The tracks are simultaneously off-putting and tranquilizing. *Syro* starts with "minipops 67 (source field mix)," which contrasts radiance with warped vocal samples. "180db_" has unsettling, altered synth loops repetitively strewn over an oscillating, start/stop drum pattern. The album ends on a softer note with "aisatsana," a simple yet satisfying piano piece laced with chirping birds. *Syro*, armed with encoded mystique and sleek grooves, is easily the best electronic album of 2014. It's the Aphex Twin album everybody's been asking for and nobody saw coming. —*Alex Coulombe*

BJ Nilsen & Stilluppsteypa / Anla Courtis
Golden Circle Afternoon Editions Mego
Street: 10.13.14
BJ Nilsen & Stilluppsteypa / Anla Courtis =
The Wanda Group +
Skullflower +
Rashad Becker

Written and recorded on a trip through Europe, this grouping of jarring noise/drone artists BJ Nilsen & Stilluppsteypa and Buenos Aires-based guitarist Anla Courtis is some type of miasmic hell-ride into the Europe depicted in all those *Hostel* movies. I am saying that because my wife lumps this into all the "haunted house" music that I listen to.

Golden Circle Afternoon is full of the type of squealing, squelching, contact-mic stabs of noise she is referring to. But listening beyond/past/through that offers some moments of pure brilliance on an otherwise straightforward noise record. The trio hits moments that rival **Oneohtrix Point Never's** deconstructed synth styling during "Fish Is God" that is then blasted apart with some power-electronics blasts of noise. Courtis' brain-melting guitar work is nearly undetectable, but his explorations into dynamic sonic landscapes have their mitts all over this record. —*Ryan Hall*

Birdie Num Num and the Spirit Squad
Subject to Change
Robot Recordings
Street: 10.14.14
Birdie Num Num and the Spirit Squad =
Ty Segall +
Pepper Rabbit +
The Black Angels

Subject to Change is a slow-paced psychedelic rock album, which contains a sense of angst and despair despite the abundance of groovy instrumentation. Birdie Num Num cover a broad spectrum of influences and tempos that are unexpected as the album moves on. They chose a fitting title. At first, tunes like "The Creek" and "Infinite" don't necessarily prepare the listener for a psychedelic rock album with their usage of indie sounds like pianos and cooing backing vocals, but it definitely gets there. You'd be hard-pressed to deny the cerebral feeling of the riffs found in later songs like "Everyone Deserves the Same Thing" and "Storm Witch." If I had to summarize it in one go, *Subject to Change* sounds like Ty Segall's hangover (in a good way). Birdie Num Num take their time in this release, and give an almost sobering emotional quality to the psychedelic genre. I've got "Lucky Old Sun" on repeat. —*Nic Smith*

Black Nail Cabaret
Satisfaction
Negative Gain Productions
Street: 11.28.14
Black Nail Cabaret =
Siouxie and The Banshees
+ Assemblage 23 +

Annie Lennox

The "Satisfaction" single blew me away the first time I heard it. It has a powerful, straight-to-the-point message of "Don't you cry, don't be whiney," and "You need time to feel ... recover yourself." The darkwave beats that these ladies have put behind these moving lyrics will make you move, become inspired and bring bodies to the dance floor. The original mix of this song can stand on its own, but the **Haujobb** remix brings out the meaning of the song even more by slowing down the RPMs, darkening it up with their experimental style and adding a ticking clock. **Emese Arvai-Illes** has an amazing voice—it soothes, scolds and seduces you all at the same time. I wouldn't be surprised if you hear some crossover diva house tracks from her very soon. The full-length release will take place in March 2015. You need to hear this! —*Mistress Nancy*

The Black Watch
Sugarplum Fairy, Sugarplum Fairy
Pop Culture Press
Street: 01.27
The Black Watch =
Billy Bragg + Built to Spill +
Tears for Fears

For their impressive 18th release, the LA-based indie group The Black Watch put together a collection of earnest songs that seem to both expand and contain the audible emotional complexity of their primary songwriter, **John Andrew Frederick**. The album title is a nod an outtake gem found in **The Beatles'** "A Day in the Life," and the record as a whole seems to convey the same tired sentiment of **Lennon's** line, "I read the news today, oh boy." However, the album plays much more like British new wave. Songs like "Scream" and "Quietly Now" surprise the usual tone of melancholy verses into shoe-gaze jamming with heavy drum lines.

Although this band still belongs to the spirit of '90s indie rock, there's a satisfying sincerity in Frederick's lyrics and presentation. If any of these descriptions interest you, keep this album around for the days when you're feeling moody. —*Nic Smith*

Faded Ranger

Mechanical Tonight
HFN Music
Street: 11.10.14
Faded Ranger =
Lee Burridge +
bad '80s pop music

If you're a fan of overly synthesized harmonies and funky pop beats like most '80s music, then this album is for you. I, for one, can't think of anything but the awkward prom scene from *Napoleon Dynamite* when I listen. There are a few good deep house beats in some of the tracks on the album that would be a lot better if they were accompanied by more haunting vocals and a few instrumental tweaks. The highlights of the album are "In Every Home A Heartache (Extended Version)," which I couldn't stop listening to, and "We Are Stars," which, like I said, had vocals that didn't go with the rest of the music. Preview the album on iTunes because it's worth checking out, but I didn't buy it. —*Julia Sachs*

Full of Hell
Full of Hell & Merzbow
Profound Lore
Street: 11.25.14
Full Of Hell = ACxDC +
Noise + Weekend Nachos

Although a collaboration, it would be more accurate to label this a Full of Hell album that incorporates elements of Merzbow's noise—Full of Hell has even said so themselves. Taken in those terms, it's the strongest Full of Hell release to date. Those looking for a completely unique grind/noise album will be disappointed, as Merzbow's presence crops up in small doses, much in the way noise interludes are incorporated in other extreme albums. It took a few listens to suss out Merzbow's contributions to the first half of the album, as they are negligibly different than Full of Hell's prior releases. Merzbow has more to say in the latter half of the album, though, with a couple of tracks that truly fit the collaborative feel. Full of Hell are as caustic as ever, and incredibly tight. *Profound Lore* is a go-to label, and, with this release, they continue their winning streak. —*Peter Fryer*

The Gary
Farewell Foolish Objects
Sick Room Records
Street: 10.28.14
The Gary = Joy Division +
Sonic Youth + Johnny Cash

I've seen some odd combinations of music in my time, and The Gary is definitely in the ranks of oddball musical fusion—bringing together elements of post-punk, roots music and Americana. The opening track, "Blank," starts off like a straight up folk song with **Dave Norwood's** vocals over simple guitar chords. Then, around the 2:22 mark,

a wall of distortion and atonal riffing hits the speakers all while Norwood's Southern-accented vocals manage to break through it. The album continues with "Coming Up For Air," a synthesis of country twang and roots music with distorted post-punk riffs and "The End to Alvernon," which boasts country-style vocals singing dark, deep and sincere lyrics evocative of the late **Ian Curtis**. While this combination is odd, The Gary actually make it work, showing off each of their inspirations in every song. —*Eric U. Norris*

Gravenhurst
Flashlight Seasons /
Black Holes in the Sand /
Offerings
Warp Records
Street: 12.02.14
Gravenhurst = Dan Mangan
+ Fleet Foxes

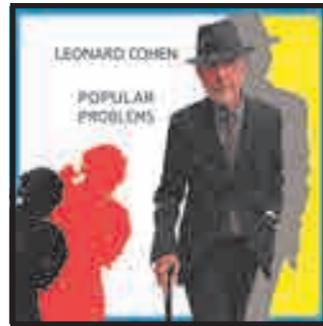
Re-releasing an album after 10 years isn't an uncommon move, especially if it's an iconic album that has gained a lot of attention since its release. Less common is re-releasing an album by an artist that hasn't managed to gain a particularly strong following. *Flashlight Sessions* falls into this latter category and luckily, this album rules. Gravenhurst is the work of singer-songwriter **Nick Talbot**, and Warp Records is right to try and share his music again with the world. This album is full of whispered acoustic songs that are layered with electronics in a way that is somewhat reminiscent of early **Grizzly Bear**—who happen to be on the same label—only it's more effective than that band's earliest output. With the popularity of artists like **Elliott Smith** in the period just before its initial release, it's a wonder this album doesn't have a larger following. —*Alex Gilvarry*

Lagwagon
Hang
Fat Wreck Chords
Street: 10.28.14
Lagwagon = Nerf Herder +
No Use For A Name +
The Flatliners

It's amazing what nine years of not releasing new material can do to a band—case in point, Lagwagon's *Hang*. The band's latest release contains deeper and, at times, more brooding lyrical content, showing their turn toward a more sentimental songwriting approach. "Burden of Proof," the ominous acoustic album opener, sets the stage for some very emotional disclosure and immediately gives way to the fast-paced, melody-driven "Reign," confirming that Lagwagon still pack a punch. Every song stands out on this record. "Made of Broken Parts," "Poison in the Well," "Drag," "Burning Out in Style" and "In Your Wake" are

panned out with heavy riffing, crest-fallen melodies and somewhat nihilistic lyrics. They give ode to **Tony Sly (Joey Cape's)** longtime friend and fallen punk hero) with "One More Song." While *Hang* is different than Lagwagon's best-known work, it will definitely leave some emotion resonating in my head. —*Eric U. Norris*

Leonard Cohen
Popular Problems
Columbia Records
Street: 09.23.14
Leonard Cohen = Nick Cave
+ Tom Waits



With an overflowing ashtray for a voice, *Popular Problems* is like codeine coursing through your liver. Cohen takes the listener by the hand and walks through the rotten, damp streets of dystopia and sorrow, painting portraits with a humming organ and clean, jangled guitar. The album arcs quite nicely, peaking with "A Street," a classically structured Cohen song and ending with the airy (if a Cohen song could ever be called that) "You Got Me Singing." The lyrics are poetic and sonorous even when read, and are often spiritual in nature. (What else would you expect from Cohen?) For being 80, Cohen has still got it, which begs the question: Has Cohen ever written a bad album? I don't think so, and I hope he never stops. Pick up this album with a pack of American Spirits—I particularly enjoyed this album in the dark through headphones, and I suggest you do the same. —*Alex Cragun*

Low Fat Getting High
Self-Titled
Money Fire Records
Street: 11.11.14
Low Fat Getting High =
Queens of the Stone Age +
Nirvana + Pennywise

With a sound so raw it behaves like a B-side from your favorite punk/grunge/stoner rock compilations, Low Fat Getting High rock with an aggressive thump that won't leave your head for hours. In true punk fashion, the songs range from one to three minutes and stop so abruptly that you hardly miss a step before the next song comes crash-

ing out. There's no chance of sitting still for the 12 tracks, and screaming alone in your car is highly encouraged. The album is not without its catchy moments either, and "Bath Salts", "Don't Believe You Anymore" and "Mint Gum" are easy listens for those new to this band's sound. Fans of hardcore punk can rejoice with this release. For those of you looking for rock with a little kick and integrity, I say this record is very filling. —*Benjamin Tilton*

Medicine
Home Everywhere
Captured Tracks
Street: 10.28.14
Medicine = Del Venicci +
Animal Collective +
Purling Hiss

Medicine has solidified their position as noise-pop connoisseurs since reuniting in 2013 after an 18-year hiatus. *Home Everywhere* is their second album since reuniting, and is the follow-up to last year's *To the Happy Few*. **Brad Laner** handles Medicine's sound from guitar to electronics, and he's worked on recordings for **Caribou** and **Brian Eno**, among others. Laner's collaborative partners hint at his ability to step outside the box, and unsurprisingly, *Home Everywhere* is nothing short of experimental guitar greatness. "Don't Be Slow" is a tropical psychedelic number that sounds like **The Flaming Lips** working with **Tame Impala** to package the latter's fuzzed out harmonies with the Lips' sense for odd pop. Songs like this one don't paint Medicine as the early shoegaze pioneers that they are, but it does prove that their sonic palette has always looked forward—and never back—for inspiration. —*Justin Gallegos*

Megafortress
Believer
Driftless Recordings
Street: 11.20.14
Megafortress = Son Lux /
Sufjan Stevens / Bon Iver

This is a record for a curious ear, a broken heart or a wandering soul. *Believer* is full of sincerity and genuine talent. **Bill Gillam** composes symphonic, mostly electronic pieces that are about as sparse as the recordings from **Nicholas Jaar's** excellent album, *Space Is Only Noise*. On top of the meditative and minimal soundscapes is Gillam's angelic voice that is as soothing as it is grabbing. With these dynamic elements, *Believer*, Gillam's debut album, is as strange as it is beautiful. "Murderer" begins as a dance track then breaks into spaced-apart, warbled sound bits before introducing a new rhythm with Gillam's poignant words, "I cannot make out your intentions / But I know mine." *Believer* is a powerful record that greatly expands on the

slightly R&B, ambient recordings of Megafortress' previously released EP. *Believer's* tracks bring balance to my being, and I can't wait to hear it on vinyl. —Justin Gallegos

Memphis Dawls

Rooted in the Bone

Madjack Records

Street: 11.04.14

Memphis Dawls = Emmylou Harris + The Everly Brothers + The Civil Wars



One of my favorite things, musically, are great vocal harmonies, and the Memphis Dawls are exceptionally good at them. To so many people, folk music is code for dusty and boring, but I would challenge anyone to get through one spin of *Rooted in the Bone* and dare to utter the word boring. Songs like "Liar" transform this three-piece, all-girl folk band into a '60s soul group, and at the same time, the traditional gospel sounds of "Where'd You Go My Love" all feel at home on this record. Another standout is the wanderlust-filled country tune "Ride Alone"—with steel guitar and the girls' vocals, it may be the loneliest song I've ever heard. Folk being the root of all music, I think that might be why a group like these gifted gals can go anywhere musically and still seem to make it all come from the same place. —James Orme

Morbosidad

Tortura

Nuclear War Now!

Street: 12.15.14

Morbosidad = Bathory + Sepultura + Sodom

The four songs on this nice and vicious MLP release from Texas underground black/death metal heroes are balls-out, fantastic, need-to-hear ear-crushers. The band known for having some pretty gritty production tones actually took a bit of a cleaner approach with these songs, and it sounds amazing—even on an MP3 promo. The tones presented have that tinge that make vinyl soundings know this will sound even more amazing on that precious wax. The black metal side feels slightly toned down for Morbosidad—instead, the

MLP reeks of the dark thrash chaos similar to the black metal bands in the equation with hints of death spewing. Add some of the Brazilian speed contingent, and you get the idea—only with renewed hate and even more glorious speed and gritty, tar-tainted riffing. There is a reason Morbosidad are underground heroes, and *Tortura* furthers that nail into the metal cross. —Bryer Wharton

Neil Young

Storytone

Warner Bros.

Street: 11.04.14

Neil Young = Crazy Horse

You never know what Neil Young is going to do next. After 2012's aptly named *Psychedelic Pill* and this April's set of covers, *A Letter Home*, the newest chapter in his musical saga (35th release, to be exact) contains stories told in duotone, so to speak, each song rendered in minimal, acoustic guitar versions and with full orchestration. This approach works better for some tunes than others, and none of them, unfortunately, rank with his best work. The album release was celebrated by an art opening for Young's first-ever West Coast exhibition of his watercolors, including his design for the album cover, in Santa Monica. —Stakerized!

Para Elite / Total Annihilation

Battle On Split EP

Skinflint Music

Street: 11.25.14

Para Elite = Blitz +

Condemned 84 +

White Flag Down

Total Annihilation =

Anti-Heroes +

Lower Class Brats

Never have I heard an Oil band that had lyrics as raucous as **Cock Sparrer's** or compositions as abrasive as any **Warzone** track until I heard Para Elite. With White Flag Down's **Coop** as frontman and **Cliff Warby** of Condemned 84 behind the kit, I guarantee that "Battle Cry" and "Hang the Banker" will continue to resonate in their listeners' heads. However, they're not the only ones to hold their own on this split—Total Annihilation hit back hard with their raw, street punk-oriented vitality. The gravel-voiced **Jimi Yamamoto** rips through the crass lyrics of "Death of a Nation" and "In Bed with the Reds" with his trachea-shredding vocals. Oi! may have reached its peak some time ago, but these patriotic American skins prove that as long as their Doc Martens hold up, they'll be stomping all over this goddamned country. —Eric U. Norris

Rancid

...*Honor Is All We Know*

Epitaph/Hellcat Records

Street: 10.27.14

Rancid = Operation Ivy + UK Subs + The Vandals

It's ideal that Rancid's first studio effort since 2009 starts off with "Back Where I Belong," with its chorus chanting, "I've been gone way too long, now I'm back where I belong!" I can honestly say that ...*Honor Is All We Know* is up there with ...*And Out Come the Wolves* as one of Rancid's most substantial albums. "Collision Course" hits with some nostalgia as it calls back to their raw, street punk sound, "Evil's My Friend" gives their ska listeners something to dance to, and "Malfunction" has a chorus that fans will scream out of their car windows. The title-track is the one that stands out the most—with guitar melodies that match the expressive and hopeful lyrics sung by each member. Not only is this one of the best Rancid albums that I've heard in years, it's also proof that Rancid is still hammering with ferocity. —Eric U. Norris

Röyksopp

The Inevitable End

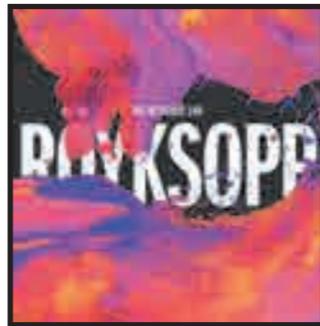
Dog Triumph Records

Street: 11.07.14

Röyksopp = a less ethereal

Björk + Robyn + Worlds-era

Porter Robinson



One of Norway's more popular electronic groups is back with their second release of the year, though this one is about twice as long as its predecessor, *Do It Again*, which features Robyn. The album combines synthesized, down-tempo electronic pop beats with ethereal female vocals, which makes for really cool pop tracks on songs like "Save Me," and "Monument," but gets a bit darker and more melancholy on tracks like "Rong." The production on the album is really well done, with great attention to detail and use of various instruments on every track. It's definitely one to check out if you're looking to broaden your knowledge of good groups from around the world. —Julia Sachs

Shiny Two Shiny

When the Rain Stops

Captured Tracks

Street: 12.02.14

Shiny Two Shiny = early

Everything But The Girl + In The Garden—era Eurythmics



Long disbanded and mostly unknown in the U.S.—having previously released a sole mini LP of eight tracks and just one single from that (and those only in Europe) before disbanding in 1984—early '80s minimal synth duo **Gayna Florence Perry** and her former bandmate, guitarist **Robin Surtees** achieved cult status by having this LP hit the UK indie top 10. (Both were in **A Formal Sigh**, which had the distinction of having done a legendary *Peel Session* before they split from that band). Here that is in its entirety, plus the 7" and 12" mixes from their debut single, "Waiting For Us," and its B-side, "Ritual Hate," and an experimental live track, "Seven Four," all showcasing promise. While the duo's demise is irrelevant now, it is interesting how progressive they sound—multi-tracking songs around a drum-machine base—with Perry's pleasant vocals and keys complementing Surtees' guitar. —Dean O Hillis

Stockholm Monsters

All At Once

Captured Tracks

Street: 12.02.14

Stockholm Monsters =

New Order + The Smiths +

Morrissey

Stockholm Monsters are Manchester contemporaries of New Order, discovered by that band's bassist, **Peter Hook**, in 1980—not long after, they became labelmates on **Factory Records**. Captured Tracks is re-releasing their entire catalogue: the full-length studio recording *Alma Mater* as well as several 7"s and singles into the mid-'80s, including the poke at rival label, "How Corrupt Is Rough Trade?" Produced by Hook, these songs are a bit more poppy than New Order, but had the misfortune of falling under their shadow and **Ian Curtis'** death as well, but their music inspired a number of later Brit indie musicians, and still sounds vital now. —Stakerized!

Sunbears!

Future Sounds

New Granada

Street: 11.11.14

Sunbears! =

The Flaming Lips /

Spiritualized

Future Sounds is full of bizarre and lush pop songs that are reminiscent of *Abbey Road*-era **The Beatles** and **The Flaming Lips**. This isn't surprising considering that **The Flaming Lips** enlisted **Sunbears!** to contribute on a recently released Beatles tribute album. "Don't Take Too Many Things" is one of my favorite songs on *Future Sounds*. **Sunbears!** could play the recorded version of this song today or 20 years from now and convince some people it's actually a Beatles song. It's full of rising vocal harmonies that repeat the song's title while a guitar, bells and cello play in orchestral format. It's such a good song. As the album progresses, there are more psychedelic pop journeys that beg the question: Why aren't **Sunbears!** more popular? Well, after this album, they might be. —Justin Gallegos

Usnea

Random Cosmic Violence

Relapse

Street: 11.10.14

Usnea = Samothrace +

Disma + Winter



I stumbled upon **Usnea** while digging through Bandcamp about a year ago and was impressed with the blackened, funeral doom/death concoction on their debut. Fast-forward to 2014—heavy-weight label **Relapse** has put out their follow-up. This style can easily get bogged down in its dirging pace and atmosphere. Fortunately, **Usnea** has no such issues on *Random Cosmic Violence*. While most of the pacing is slow, their knack for melodic guitar work, passionate vocals and black metal flourishes make for a captivating listen. The best part of low and slow music is that when it changes up, the effect is potent. This is most evident in the title track, which is also the highlight of the album. "Random Cosmic Violence" showcases the mix of musical influences and impeccable timing that set **Usnea** apart. This may fly under the radar, and it's too bad, because it's excellent. —Peter Fryer

Various Artists

Secret Stash Records

Presents: The One-derful!

Records Collection

Secret Stash Records

Street: 10.28.14

The One-derful! Records

Collection =

The Five Du-Tones +

Beverly Shaffer +

The Sharpees +

Wanda Davis

This is the first installment of a compilation than spans from 1962–1971 of rare soul, funk and gospel gems. These come straight from the vaults of the legendary African-American Chicago labels that brought about the mid-'60s R&B dance hits of **The Five Du-Tones'** "Shake A Tail Feather" or group soul harmonies of **The Sharpees'** "Take Me To Your Leader." However, while jiving to these, don't forget the deep, soulful ballads of **Liz Lands'** "Seventh Hour" and **Betty Everett's** "Your Love is Important to Me." If that has whetted your appetite, then you'd best break out your wallet for these artifacts, for this is essential for any hip weirdo's record collection. There is more to come from these collected works down the road, but this is where you start. These 25 tracks are available via double LP or by CD. Stop wasting time and dig this. —Nick Kuzmack

Vashti Bunyan

Heartleap

Fat Cat Records

Street: 10.07.14

Vashti Bunyan =

Sung Tongs-era

Animal Collective + Bon Iver

+ Joanna Newsom

Vashti Bunyan has been making music since the '70s, but *Heartleap* is only her third, and probably last, album. It's a bit of a shame that such a unique and valuable voice has had such a limited output, but what we do have is well worth the wait between albums. *Heartleap* sounds, in many respects, like a lot of acoustic-based music that has been made in the last two decades or so—but I'd like to think that's mainly because Vashti Bunyan pioneered the "Freak Folk" genre with her album *Just Another Diamond* way back in 1970. *Heartleap* is possibly a step below her previous output, but it's still a fantastic album from an influential artist who, I'm sad to hear, won't be making music anymore. If you're a fan of **Neutral Milk Hotel**, **Devendra Banhart** or most any modern indie-folk act, this is worth checking out. —Alex Gilvary

Vircolac

Codex Perfida

Iron Bonehead

Street: 12.22.14

Vircolac =

The Ruins of Beverast +

Primordial + Arcane Sun

Here we have another sweet little demo from an at-the-moment-pretty-unknown band, once again from the German **Iron Bonehead** label. Before I gush about **Vircolac**, I have to say that I absolutely love the fact that the label officially releases band's demos for more mass consumption. Consume and repeat is what you will want to do with this multiple-subgenre-tackling Irish band. They execute black, death and doom metal quite well, pumping out the atmosphere of dread heavily, with an equally dark and aggressive nature—all presented in a humble set of four songs (more like three: The first is an intro track). This band's way of transitioning from gloomy, almost epic death/doom (at times) to blazing, gritty blackened styles does exactly what a demo should do—leave the listener wanting more. —Bryer Wharton

Wilco

Alpha Mike Foxtrot: Rare

tracks 1994–2014 / What's

Your 20? Essential Tracks

Nonesuch

Street: 11.17.14

Wilco = Uncle Tupelo +

Jeff Tweedy – Son Volt

Twenty years of **Wilco**—where has the time flown? The occasion of the anniversary of this quintessential *No Depression* alt-country band is marked by a four LP/CD release of studio and live recording rarities, and a two-CD set of essential tracks taken from previously released studio albums. Where to even start? There are so many gems, like the demo for their chestnut "Passenger Side" to a cover of their '60s predecessor **Buffalo Springfield** ("Burned") to a twangier, still teenage-lovestruck cover of **Big Star's** "Thirteen." The band took what Tweedy had started with **Jay Farrar** in **Uncle Tupelo**, developed it, and took it further to create something that would become a classic, American indie sound—something I can imagine we'll still be hankering for 20 years from now. Including 36 pages of liner notes filled with recollections from band members, it's a must-have for any lover of **Wilco** or alt-country in general. —Stakerized!

Witchrist

Vritra

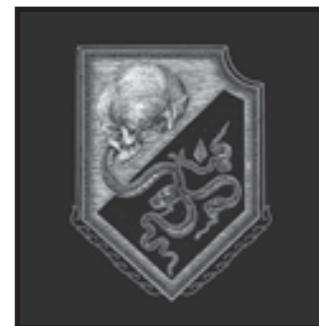
Iron Bonehead

Street: 12.31.14

Witchrist = Coffins +

Blasphemerian + Diocletian

Well-established New Zealand death dealers **Witchrist** have enlisted some new blood for this highly enticing and gratuitously grim MLP, and it's beyond fucking heavy. Comprising mostly



members of the ferocious black/death band **Diocletian**, *Vritra* brings in **Bölzer** vocalist **KzR**, and he complements the release with a nicely differing, growling vocal ferocity than **Witchrist's** two full-length recordings. The three songs here aren't quite in the business of being dynamic, as they offer more of a pummeling of riffs and a culmination of a few different influences. The mixing is what **Witchrist** is becoming known for. There is a great presence of old-school death metal, particularly Swedish, but one could even say some other Euro influences like German and Polish. Add that old-school death with some signature New Zealand occult/war-styled blackness. Look to this for some muddy, down-tuned heavy on the death metal blackness for a fantastic way to say goodbye to 2014. —Bryer Wharton

Young Ejecta

The Planet

Driftless

Street: 01.27

Young Ejecta = Neon Indian

x Porcelain Raft +

I Break Horses

Hone in your inner constellation chaser with the post disco beats, breathy vocals and overall sensuality of **Young Ejecta's** (formerly **Ejecta**) newest mini-album. Simple yet emotionally varied production from **Joel Ford** combined with **Leanne Macomber's** fragile and ethereal vocals successfully transport us to another universe fraught with star dust, gracefully spiraling nebulas and twinkling planets in the distance. However otherworldly this soundscape may seem, it is **Macomber's** pseudo-sexual lyrics that keep us rooted to the Earth by a string around our ankles, hovering comfortably between worlds known and unrevealed expanses. **Ford's** sound ranges between pulsating cosmic compositions ("Your Planet" and "Into Your Heart") to minimalistic arrangements bound in simplicity ("What You Done" and "Recluse"). *The Planet* is good for those who aren't ready for the full-on interstellar adventure and experienced explorers alike. —Allison Shephard

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THE DAILY CALENDAR

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Friday, January 2 Happy Birthday, Somerset Bivens!

New Years in Vienna - *Abravanel*
Broken Down Guitars - *Brewskis*
DJ Juggy - *Downstairs*
Stoned - *Hog Wallow*
Nora Dates, Heartless Breakers - *Kilby*
All Star Monster Truck Tour - *Maverik Center*
Wall Of The Fallen, Controlled Demise, You'll Die Knowing - *Metro*
High Pressure Flash, Bloodfunk, Wonderstone - *The Royal*
Dubwise, SPL - *Urban*
Ogden's First Friday Art Stroll - *Various Galleries*
Provo Gallery Stroll - *Various Galleries*
Book On Tape Worm, Brady & Sydney - *Velour*
Bombshell Academy, MiNX, Show Me Island - *Woodshed*

Saturday, January 3 Happy Birthday, Cody Kirkland!

New Years in Vienna - *Abravanel*
Balance of Power, Eyes Of Damnation, Dezecration, Unthinkable Thoughts, Silenced By Dawn - *Bar Deluxe*
Frank Vignola & Friends - *Capitol Theatre*
Batcave Gothic Industrial - *Club X*
Reckless Kelly, Micky & The Motorcars - *Depot*
Miss DJ Lux - *Downstairs*
Bullets & Belles - *Garage*
Back Wash - *Hog Wallow*
Larusso, The Boy That Lives, Dear Lucian, The Mail Box Order - *Kilby*
All Star Monster Truck Tour - *Kilby*
Winter Farmer's Market - Rio Grande
The North Valley, Albino Father, Koala Temple, King Tiiiger - *Urban*
Book On Tape Worm, Quiet House - *Velour*
Fight King: Rocky Mountain Fight Championships - *Western Park Arena*
Sunday, January 4

Happy Birthday, Gregory Gerulat!

Monday, January 5

Sun Dog, Shasta & The Second Strings, Wonderstone, Fast Eddy - *Metro*

Tuesday, January 6

Do Your Laundry Day (Don't Question It—Just Do It.)

Wednesday, January 7 Happy Birthday, Christian Schultz!

Humut Tabal, Blood Purge, Curseworship - *Bar Deluxe*
John Davis - *Hog Wallow*
L'anarchiste, Strong Words, Bat Manors, Soft Limbs - *Urban*
Mathew Skaggs, Michael Radford, Branson Anderson - *Velour*

Thursday, January 8 Happy Birthday, Angela H. Brown!

Happy Birthday, Jordan Devereaux!
The Anchorage, Be Like Max, Problem Daughter, The Sinisters - *Kilby*
Brushstrokes of Genius: Creativity and the Artist's Soul - *The Leonardo*
Flannel Graph - *Velour*

Friday, January 9

Samba Fogo - *Bar Deluxe*
Elite Fight Night 25 - *Complex*
Randy Rogers Band, Stoney Larue - *Depot*
Miss DJ Lux - *Downstairs*
The Subdudes - *Egyptian Theatre*
Ben Miller Band - *Garage*
Bad Feather - *Hog Wallow*
Max Pain & The Groovies, Red Telephone, Spirit Tribe - *Kilby*
Winter Burial, Odium Totus, Huldra, Black Throne, In The Arms Of Atrocity - *Metro*
The Mother Hips - *OP Rockwell*
Jhonny K & Krew, Fundamentals, Shasta & The Second Strings - *The Royal*
Nico & Vinz - *UCCU Events Center*
SLUG Localized: Merchant

Royal, Big Wild Wings, Night Wings - Urban

Sugar House Art Walk - *Various Galleries*
Gypsy Cab, Jack Pines - *Velour*
Moonshine Bandits, Big B, Demun Jones - *Westerner*
Curtis Wardle, Maxx Teuscher



Photo: Garrett Allen

Catch local indie darlings Chalk at Kilby Court Friday, Jan. 17 with Great Interstate and Red Bennies.

- *Why Sound*
Zombiecock - *Woodshed*

Saturday, January 10

Juana Ghani, Paul Hitter, Folk Hogan - *Bar Deluxe*
DJ Soulman - *Downstairs*
The Subdudes - *Egyptian Theatre*
CoolaBiBus - *Hog Wallow*
Better Taste Bureau, Brothers From Another, Matty Mac, Bearsohmy, Kemp - *Kilby*
Affiance, Phinehas, Kingdom of Giants, Beneath Red Skies, Delusions of Godhood, The Hands of Desecration - *Loading Dock*
Charlatan, The Stigmata Massacre, Away At Lakeside, The Mother Hips - *OP Rockwell*
Element Nine - *Murray Theater*

Winter Farmer's Market - Rio Grande
Ring Around The Rose - *Rose Wagner*

The SLUG Games: Battle At Basin - Snowbasin

The Mother Hips - *State Room*
Family Art Saturday: New is Old, Old is New - *UMOCA*
Mr. Vandal, Grimblee, Sweaty Nerd - *Urban*
Premiere Meltdown, Go For Broke, Discard Pile - *Velour*

Stroller Tours - *UMOCA*
Beachmen, 90s Television, The Circulars, Empty Street Riot - *Urban*

Thursday, January 15

Nappy Roots - *Area 51*
Damon Leibert, Derrick Keane, Mike McCarthy, Derek Richards - *Egyptian Theatre*
Green River Blues - *Kilby*
Seven Feathers Rainwater, High Counsel, Terracotta - *Urban*
Corey Christiansen, Emily Merrell - *Why Sound*

Friday, January 16

Skull Fist, Elm Street, Night Demon, Visigoth, Darkblood, Xenium - *Bar Deluxe*
Gleewood - *Brewskis*
Damon Leibert, Derrick Keane, Mike McCarthy, Derek Richards - *Egyptian Theatre*
South Rail - *Garage*
29th Annual HOF Germanfest - *Golden Spike*
Marinade - *Hog Wallow*
Red Bennies, Great Interstate, Chalk - *Kilby*
Krisian Bush - *Outlaw Saloon*
Mokie - *State Room*
Class Of 808, Bastion, Type-funk, Nate Lowpass - *Urban*
Salt Lake Gallery Stroll - *Various Galleries*
Velour's 9th Anniversary - *Velour*
Hoodoo, The Atlas Grove - *Why Sound*

Saturday, January 17 Happy Birthday, Shawn Soward!

Mobile Deathcamp, Blood Purge, Deathblow, Repeat Offender - *Bar Deluxe*
Pearl Fishers - *Capitol Theatre*
Damon Leibert, Derrick Keane, Mike McCarthy, Derek Richards - *Egyptian Theatre*
Matt Hopper & The Roman Candles, The Highway Thieves - *Garage*
29th Annual HOF Germanfest - *Golden Spike*
Big Blue Ox - *Hog Wallow*
Loss Of Existence, Below Fiction, Beneath Red Skies, Stigmata Massacre, Thalgora, Ossatura

Tuesday, January 13

Cruel Hand, Angel Du\$, The Beautiful Ones - *Kilby*

Wednesday, January 14

Conveyer, Meridian, Give and Take, Hands of the Martyr, Surviving Terror, Attack The Sunset - *Loading Dock*

- *In The Venue*
Merchant Royal, The Wild War, Terracotta - *Kilby*
The Second City - *Kingsbury*
Revolt, Braintead Constance, Carrie Myers Music - *Majos*
DiselNgaged, Disforia, Dismiss the Silence - *Murray Theater*
Manufactured Superstars - *Park City Live*

Saturday, January 24 Winter Farmer's Market - Rio Grande

SB Dance: Wine, Theater, Food - *Rose Wagner*
Cash'd Out - *State Room*
Desert Noises, Starmy, Wildcat Strike - *Urban*
Velour's 9th Anniversary - *Velour*
The Rompstompers, Hi-Fi Murder, Jail City Rockers - *Why Sound*

Sunday, January 18

Nekrofilth, Weapönizer, Odium Totus, Burn Your World - *Bar Deluxe*
Cody Canada & The Departed, Jason Boland & The Stragglers - *State Room*

Monday, January 19 Happy Birthday, Matt Brunk!

California X - *Loading Dock*
Miner - *The Royal*
Aesop Rock, Rob Sonic, Home-boy Sandman - *Urban*

Wednesday, January 21 Happy Birthday, Ben Tilton!

Kebyn Dern - *Hog Wallow*

Thursday, January 22

Reaper The Storyteller - *Area 51*
Morgan Snow - *Hog Wallow*
Koala Temple, Grass, Ghost Logic - *Kilby*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
Billy Shaddox, Cory Mon, Jared Harding - *Velour*

Friday, January 23

Gleewood, Secret Circus, Robyn Cage, Pablo Blaqk, Q & The Current - *Atticus Coffee*
DJ SaYo - *Brewskis*
Guster - *Depot*
Billy Shaddox, Honey Pine - *Garage*
Bad Feather - *Hog Wallow*
The Pelican's, Rich Girls - *Kilby*
By the Thousands, Superior, Thalgora, Deithrone the Sovereign, Silence Protocol - *Loading Dock*
Skrillex - *Park City Live*
Andy Frasco & The U.N. - *State Room*
Wiz Khalifa - *UCCU Events Center*
Hell's Bells - *Urban*

2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
2015 Slamdance Film Festival - Various Venues
Static Waves, RKDN - *Velour*
Once The Lion - *Why Sound*
Lazy Susan, Tupelo Moan - *Woodshed*

Saturday, January 24

Gleewood, Secret Circus, Robyn Cage, Pablo Blaqk, Q & The Current - *Atticus Coffee*
The Toasters, Surgeon General,

Happy Birthday, Tommy Dolph!

Gleewood, Secret Circus, Robyn Cage, Pablo Blaqk, Q & The Current - *Atticus Coffee*
Haunted Summer, Big Wild Wings, Season O The Witch - *Kilby*
Heaps N' Heaps, Coyote Vision Group - *Urban*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
2015 Slamdance Film Festival - Various Venues
Alarm Call - *Velour*

A-Rodge, Babblyon, RyRy, Kendrick - *Kilby*
Knife Party - *Park City Live*
You by Graham Brown - *Rose Wagner*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
2015 Slamdance Film Festival - Various Venues
Alarm Call - *Velour*

Friday, January 30

Strauss' "A Hero's Life" - *Abravanel*
Calabrese - *Area 51*



Photo: Gilbert Cisneros

Provo's Desert Noises hit Urban Lounge on Saturday, Jan. 17 with Starmy and Wildcat Strike.

Bombshell Academy - *Bar Deluxe*
Controlled Burn - *Garage*
SLC White Party - Gateway - Grand Hall
Jukebox The Ghost, Twin Forks, Secret Someones - *Kilby*
Iggly Azalea - *Park City Live*
Winter Farmer's Market - *Rio Grande*
Moors & McCumber - *State Room*
Hell's Bells - *Urban*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
King Tuff - *Kilby*
Portugal. The Man - *Park City Live*
Mark Kozelek of Sun Kil Moon & Red House Painters - *State Room*
Scenic Byway - *Urban*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
Bat Manors - *Velour*
Driver Out - *Why Sound*

Sunday, January 25

Gleewood, Secret Circus, Robyn Cage, Pablo Blaqk, Q & The Current - *Atticus Coffee*
Geek Show Movie Night - *Brewvies*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
2015 Slamdance Film Festival - Various Venues

Monday, January 26 Happy Birthday, Rheanna Sonnichsen!

Tuesday, January 27
Lindsay Stirling - *Park City Live*
Particle - *State Room*
Tim Notaro - *Urban*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
2015 Slamdance Film Festival - Various Venues

Wednesday, January 28 Happy Birthday, Kendal Gillett!

Happy Birthday, Talyn Sherer!
King Tuff - *Kilby*
Portugal. The Man - *Park City Live*
Mark Kozelek of Sun Kil Moon & Red House Painters - *State Room*
Scenic Byway - *Urban*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
Kate Elaine, Liam Cahill - *Woodshed*

Thursday, January 29

Cold Blue Mountain, Hard Men, Making Fuck, Stargrazer - *Bar Deluxe*
Mark Chaney & The Garage All Stars - *Garage*
Start SLC: Church & State - Gateway Mall
Talia Keys, Gemini Mind - *Hog Wallow*

Salt City Sirens Burlesque - *Bar Deluxe*

Start SLC: Sustainable Startups - Gateway Mall
Periphery, Thank You Scientist, Nothing More, Wovenwar - *In The Venue*
The Circulars, Beachmen, Nick Neihart - *Kilby*
Mates Of State, Fictionist, Eidola, Scenic Byway - *Metro*
Alesso - *Park City Live*
Flabbergast - *Rose Wagner*
Sleeping With Sirens, Pierce The Veil - *Saltair*
Whitey Morgan & The 78's - *State Room*
Tokimonsta - *Urban*
Park City's Last Friday Gallery Stroll - *Various Galleries*

Friday, February 6

Pick up the new issue of SLUG - Anyplace Cool
Tanglewood - *Brewskis*
Terrance Simien & The Zydeco Experience - *Egyptian Theatre*
The Weekenders - *Hog Wallow*
Wareye, Out Of Anger, Hisingen, Sorrow For Virtue, Versus The Man - *Metro*
G. Love & Special Sauce, Matt Costa - *Park City Live*
They Reminisce - *Rose Wagner*
SteelFist Fight Night 31 - *The Rail*
Ogden's First Friday Art Stroll - *Various Galleries*
Provo Gallery Stroll - *Various Galleries*
Isaac Russell, Timmy The Teeth - *Velour*

Saturday, January 31

Fetish Ball - *Area 51*
YG, ASAP Ferg - *Complex*
Eric Church's The Outsiders, Halestorm - *EnergySolutions*
Start SLC: Sustainable Startups - Gateway Mall
Johanna Johanna, Shot In The Mountain, Foreign Figures, Cory Mon - *Kilby*
Winter Farmer's Market

- Rio Grande

Mountain Standard Time - *State Room*
Flash & Flare, Geronimo - *Urban*
2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues
The Strike! - *Velour*

Sunday, February 1 2015 Sundance Film Festival - Various Venues

Monday, February 2 Happy Birthday, Matt Hoenes!

Bad Suns, Coasts, Maudlin Strangers - *Complex*

Tuesday, February 3

Murder By Death - *Bar Deluxe*
Logic, DJ Rhetorik, Michael Christmas - *Complex*
NOVA Chamber Music Series Presents: Late Beethoven and Post-Minimalism - *Libby Gardner Hall*
The Expendables, Katastro - *Park City Live*
The New Mastersounds, The Heard - *State Room*
Max Pain & The Groovies, Joy, Red Telephone, Koala Temple - *Urban*

Wednesday, February 4

Saint Motel, The Moth & The Flame - *Kilby*
Two Stories - *Salt Lake Acting Co.*

Thursday, February 5

Behemoth, Cannibal Corpse, Aeon, Tribulation - *Complex*
Joe McQueen Quartet - *Garage*
Silverstein, Hands Like Houses, Major League, My Iron Lung - *In The Venue*

Friday, February 6

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The Weekenders - *Hog Wallow*
Wareye, Out Of Anger, Hisingen, Sorrow For Virtue, Versus The Man - *Metro*
G. Love & Special Sauce, Matt Costa - *Park City Live*
They Reminisce - *Rose Wagner*
SteelFist Fight Night 31 - *The Rail*
Ogden's First Friday Art Stroll - *Various Galleries*
Provo Gallery Stroll - *Various Galleries*
Isaac Russell, Timmy The Teeth - *Velour*

Check out expanded listings and additional events throughout the month on **SLUGMag.com**

THE URBAN JANUARY 2015

Jan 1: First Mistakes Party
 Jan 2: Dubwise featuring SPL 9PM DOORS
 Jan 3: Albino Father Album Release, Koala Temple, King Tiger
 Jan 7: FREE SHOW L'Anarchiste, Strong Words, Bat Manors, Soft Limbs
 Jan 8: Fuck The Informer - SMILES OPTIONAL SHOW, Feat: TBA
 Jan 9: SLUG Localized Merchant Royal, Big Wild Wings, Night Wings 19PM DOORS
 Jan 10: Dirt First Presents Mr. Vandal, Grimblee, Sweaty Nerd 19 PM DOORS
 Jan 12: Zola Jesus, Deradoorian
 Jan 14: FREE SHOW Beachmen, 90s Television, The Circulars, Empty Street Riot
 Jan 15: FREE SHOW High Counsel, Seven, Feathers Rainwater, Stag Hare, Terracotta
 Jan 16: Class of 808 Bastion, Typefunk, Nate Lowpass 19PM DOORS
 Jan 17: Desert Noises, Stormy, Wildcat Strike
 Jan 19: Aesop Rock w/ Rob Sonic, Homeboy Sandman, DJ Abditas
 Jan 20: HAPPY BIRTHDAY - DANIELLE MARIOTTI
 Jan 22: Saga Outdoor Retailers Party
 Jan 23: Hells Belles Night #1
 Jan 24: Hells Belles Night #2
 Jan 26: Heaps & Heaps, Coyote Visitation Group
 Jan 27: Tig Notaro (Seated Event)
 Jan 28: FREE SHOW Scenic Byway
 Jan 29: FREE SHOW Breakers, Red Bennies
 Jan 30: Skullicandy Presents Tokimonsta
 Jan 31: Flash & Flare, Dj Geronimo

COMING SOON:

Feb 2: Joy
 Feb 4: FREE SHOW Giant
 Feb 6: DUBWISE with Roommate
 Feb 7: City Weekly's Best of Utah Music Winners Show: L'Anarchiste, King Neko, Westward The Tide
 Feb 10: Scott H Biram
 Feb 11: St. Paul & The Broken Bones
 Feb 12: Cursive
 Feb 13: Anel Pink
 Feb 15: The Floozies
 Feb 16: Hank Martin
 Feb 20: The Growlers
 Feb 22: Circulation
 Feb 26: Free Show Merchant Royal
 Feb 27: Toop
 Mar 1: B. Dukan
 Mar 4: FREE SHOW featuring Royce Da 5'9 And DJ Premier
 Mar 7: Doozies
 Mar 13: The Dodos
 Mar 16: Moxie Album Release
 Mar 20: Public Service Broadcasting
 Mar 27: This Will Destroy You
 Mar 31: SZA
 Apr 1: Rev Peyton's Big Damn Band
 Apr 2: Quantic
 Apr 21: Twin Shadow

241 S 500 E SLC | 21+

DOORS AT 8PM UNLESS

KILBY COURT JANUARY!

3: Laruso, The Boy That Lives, Dear Lucian, The Mail Box Order
 8: The Anchorage, Be Like Max, Problem Daughter, The Sinisters
 9: Max Pain and the Groovies (Album Release), Red Telephone, Spirit Tribe
 10: Better Taste Bureau, Brothers From Another, Mitty Mac, Bearsolmy, Kemp
 13: Cruel Hand, Angel DuSt, The Beautiful Ones
 15: Green River Blues
 16: Red Bennies, Great Interstate, Chalk
 17: Merchant Royal, The Wild War, Terracotta
 22: Koala Temple, Grass, Ghost Logic
 23: The Pelican's Fundraiser Show
 24: Jukebox The Ghost, Twin Parks, Secret Someones
 26: Haunted Summer, Big Wild Wings, The Season Of The Witch
 28: King Tuff
 29: A-Rodge, Babbylon, RyRy, Kendrick
 30: The Circulars, Beachmen, Nick Niehart
 31: Johanna Johanna, Shot In The Mountain, Foreign Figures, Cory Mob

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DOORS AT 7PM UNLESS NOTED

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