A man with dark dreadlocks and glasses is shown in profile, looking out over a cityscape at sunset. He is wearing a brown jacket with a thick, textured collar. The background shows a city with buildings and a sky with soft, warm light from the setting sun. In the top left corner, there are several wavy, light green lines.

The Independent Blogger's Guide to SXSW

2016 MUSIC PREVIEW

SXSW.

MUSIC

**MARCH 15-20
AUSTIN, TX**

**20
16**

Introduction



“Who are you looking forward to seeing this year?”

It’s a question I get asked almost every day. And each time without fail, there’s an awkward silence while my mind starts running through the 2000+ acts we’ve invited to perform at SXSW.

No matter which ones I rattle off, there’s always a tinge of regret afterward once I slowly start remembering countless other artists I should have mentioned.

I could have brought up how great everything I’ve heard from Pastel Ghost is or how amazingly epic Jambinai’s live show is. I forgot to mention how often I have WALL’s “Cuban Cigars” stuck in my head, and how proud I am that Austin has such great forward-thinking acts like Future Blondes, BOAN and Troller. I neglected to say how curious I am to see how people react to our first-ever Hip-Hop From Asia showcase, and how excited I am that everyone at SXSW will have the chance to see cult 80’s post-punk band Sad Lovers & Giants perform their first show on American soil.

To be honest, I’m happy to have this problem.

Once again in the spirit of discovery, we’ve asked a few of the many tastemakers we respect to share their voice. The following pages are a snapshot of the artists who we are all excited about. You’ve likely heard people talking about some of these in anticipation of the following weeks and days, while others are the “hidden gems” we’ve stumbled upon and feel passionate about.

Thanks to Austin Town Hall, Consequence of Sound, Korean Indie, Pigeons and Planes, Control+Alt+Delight, Operation Every Band, Stereogum, Remezcla, The Wild Honey Pie, Tiny Mix Tapes, Best New Bands, All Things Go, OVRLD, Buzzbands LA, Metal Rules, DIY, Complex, Blah Blah Blah Science, The Burning Ear, Resident Advisor, SoundFriend, The Line of Best Fit, We All Want Someone to Shout For, Disco Naïveté, The Bluegrass Situation, Alt Citizen, Metal Sucks, Dummy Mag, We Found New Music and I Heart Moosiq.

James Minor
General Manager of SXSW Music Festival

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LISTEN TO:
I Am Just a Whisper

Brass Bed

Lafayette, LA

In 2013, the band released *The Secret Will Keep You*, and while the fan fare didn't hit right away, something huge happened beneath the surface. Brass Bed was able to lay the groundwork for a legendary status, at least in my mind. They crafted a sparkling masterpiece that was so highly regarded in small circles that almost no one mentioned it; I think it's akin to The Wrens *Meadowlands* in that manner...it will be revered and adored by the masses in years

to come. We've heard glimpses of their newest effort, *In the Yellow Leaf*, and the band's control of pop sensibility seems to be at its pinnacle. If you're looking for a band to bet on in 2016, put your money on the table with these Louisiana folks because success and acclaim are just around the corner. ★

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Sick/Sea Beverly Eliot Sumner Blue Healer



Matt Woods

Truro, UK-England



LISTEN TO:
[In The Dark](#)

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Axel Flovent](#) [Folly Rae](#) [Kacy Hill](#) [KLOE](#)

Matt Woods' relentless passion for music drove him to move from his home in Cornwall to the city of London just a few years ago. The classically trained singer songwriter calls his music future soul, but there's something inherently intimate and so very "now" about it all. His exceptional vocal harmonies, much influenced by classic soul and gospel, are no disparity to his ultramodern electronic production. Instead, the two are complementary, building upon

one another to channel a surge of stirring emotion. Songs like "Blue Skies" and "In The Dark" will send shivers down your spine as Matt Woods evokes those poignant, lovelorn moments in life you'll never get over, no matter how hard you try to convince yourself you have. ★

Amy Huang, We Found New Music



SCOTT PACE

Kydd Jones

Austin, TX

The hip-hop scene in Austin has struggled to make itself known on a national level, so it wasn't too surprising that Kydd Jones recently relocated to Atlanta to continue his ascent up the rap hierarchy. As one of the stars of Austin's LNS Crew, Kydd is a force to be reckoned with, as comfortable producing unique beats for other artists as he is putting his own bold, intense verses out into the world. Kydd Jones has already been making waves since he left the ATX, getting acclaim for festival performances in New York and other cities last year, so this year's SXSW might be your last opportunity to catch him before he's in the major leagues. ★

Morgan Davis, OVRLD



LISTEN TO:
Still Spinning

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Myke Bogan
Krypol Haze
Riders Against The Storm
Tank Washington

Nancy Pants

Montreal, Canada



Montréal has a thriving, layered scene as distinctive as any city's, and no band represents that better than Nancy Pants. Separately, the trio of guitarist/vocalist Ohara Hale, bassist/vocalist Adam Waito, and drummer Jeremy MacCuish have contributed to MTL's music in various forms for years; together, they've hit upon the 514's ultimate configuration. Though their '60s garage pop is drowned in lo-fi mixing, its vibrant spirit shines through each track on their debut album, *Totally Nancy Pants*. There's

doo-wop swing, surf boogie, and just enough pop charm to make smiles mandatory attire while their music is playing. When they perform it live – often on their backs, kicking giddily at the air – their stage presence is the template for having a good time. If you want to feel how hot the Great White North can get, try on Nancy Pants. ★

Ben Kaye, Consequence of Sound

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Agoraphobia](#) [The Parrots](#) [IAN](#) [Seratones](#)

▶
LISTEN TO:
Happy

OSCAR

London, UK-England



LISTEN TO:
Sometimes (Radio Edit)

Young British rocker Oscar Scheller started releasing memorable songs under the guise Oscar onto Soundcloud that fit in the bedroom-rock aesthetic. They soon caught the attention of blogs and big publications alike. Now with his debut album *Cut and Paste* on the way from Wichita Recordings, Scheller has proven that he is no one trick pony. Many different influences come oozing out of the speaker, from Blur to pop, hip-hop and R&B. There's not much he can't do, and he makes it sound so positive and life affirming. The connection with Oscar is instantaneously joyful in every which way and makes me excited for the future of music. ★

Will Oliver, We All Want Someone To Shout For

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Frankie Cosmos](#)

[Clean Cut Kid](#)

[Micca](#)

[Ramesh](#)

Sevdaliza

Rotterdam, Netherlands

Sevdaliza's music is wonderfully difficult to categorize, combining her memorable vocals (sometimes sultry and seductive, sometimes menacing) with forward-thinking electronic production. The Iran-born artist, who moved to the Netherlands when she was five, isn't just pushing boundaries with her sonics; her videos are always special and her live shows are raw, sensual, and unpredictable. Recently collaborating with brilliant producer stwo, Sevdaliza's momentum is unstoppable. ★



Jacob Moore, Pigeons and Planes



LISTEN TO:
Marilyn Monroe

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Avec Sans
Somadrone
Robot Koch
OKRAA

SWIMM

Los Angeles, CA



LISTEN TO:
Belly



SWIMM came on the scene in early 2013 with 7-tracker *Feel*. From that EP, dreamy, lovelorn, and romantic tracks like “Wander,” “Feels,” and the riff-heavy “Tisk Tisk” put this Florida duo on the map as contenders in the indie-psych-rock scene. A more recent EP release, *Beverly Hells*, and its title track call to mind long, thoughtful, and relaxing rides off into the sunset. Then ‘Suddenly’ rips into trippy jams that let up just enough to let the feelings through.

On stage, the band takes on three more members and becomes heavily charged in surf-like reverb, lo-fi, and rhythms. You’d be hard pressed not to feel something during their catchy set. ★

Joshua Chiang, Control+Alt+Delight

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Annabelle Chairlegs PAUW Chocolat field trip

Allan Rayman

Lost Springs, WY



LISTEN TO:
Beverly

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Shaprece

Froyo Ma

Keeper

DESAMPA

Canadian musician Allan Rayman mixes hip-hop with a more traditional singer-songwriter sound on his refreshing 2015 album *Hotel Allan*. The album has a number of standout tracks, from the sordid love story of “Beverly,” to the late-night jam “Tennessee,” and an introspective look at maturing on “27.” The album serves as the best introduction to Allan’s engaging style, but he also has a number of other tracks, an earlier mixtape, and EP under his belt. He uses the album’s ten tracks to lyrically explore intimacy and personal growth through trial and error. Rayman balances the weighty issues in his songs with infectious base-lines and hazy production that keeps you returning to his addictive songs. ★

Nathan Headden, Operation Every Band

PWR BTTM

Brooklyn, NY



ANDREW PICCONE

▶
LISTEN TO:
Ugly Cherries

Confident and cool, unabashedly and inspiringly queer, PWR BTTM are redefining what it means to be a punk band in the 21st century. *Ugly Cherries*, the duo's debut album, breaks rules and roles in equal measure, as heavy on the riffs as it is on the message. Ben Hopkins and Liv Bruce exude a vulnerable positivity, balancing neatly on the line between humor and self-help: "I want to put the whole world in drag," goes one of their many mad-deniably catchy hooks. "But I'm starting to realize it's already like that." Their infectious, anything-goes attitude translates into energetic live performances that are not to be missed. If they keep going down the path they are, PWR BTTM will surely end up ushering in a whole new generation of queer punks. ★

James Rettig, Stereogum

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

- Baby Shakes
- Daddy Issues
- Sexy Zebras
- Flying Ipis



Jambinai

Seoul, South Korea

Jambinai transform traditional Korean instruments sounds into an audio collision of postrock. Their presence within Korean independent music is widely known around the world with multiple international tours. It doesn't matter what song Jambinai start their set with, the way they manipulate tones and melodies will blow your mind. Jambinai is able to connect with its audience without a word. ★

Chris Park, Korean Indie



LISTEN TO:
Time of Extinction

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

||
Covet (with Yvette Young)
My Education
The Octopus Project



Day Wave

Oakland, CA

Jackson Phillips used to be known for being one half of the duo Carousel, but now he's known as the leading force in the blossoming indie-rock group Day Wave. He saw a rise in popularity after releasing new material on a consistent basis, making it readily available to stream on Soundcloud and blogs. He hasn't released a proper full-length album yet, but Day Wave already has a distinctive sound that is unmissable; the sort of lush dreamy atmosphere that makes you long for summer. ★

Will Oliver, We All Want Someone To Shout For

JOHN GRVY

Madrid, Spain



LISTEN TO:
Bad Decisions

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[DΔWN](#)

[Margeaux](#)

[Diaz Grimm](#)

[Young Futura](#)



JABARI JACOBS

For a self proclaimed fan of Nietzsche and Hemingway, JOHN GRVY's music is actually a pretty cheerful experience. Most of his music is chill, but his songs hold an artistic ambition that pays off with a fresh approach to sound and even fresher melodies. Since debuting in 2013, the Madrid based musician has been putting his stellar voice to good use on hard hitting electronic instrumentals and memorable hooks, authoring a sound that's both intricate and catchy. *199X*, his debut release, has made a splash both in Spain and other countries, drawing producers from all over the globe to remix the EP into a cohesive new form. His artistic vision reaches far beyond just the music; his videos, collaborations with hot producers, and live shows are proof that he's only just begun to realize his goals. 🌟

Marcos Hassan, Remezcla



Nap Eyes

Halifax, Canada

There's gotta be something special in the waters of Halifax, Nova Scotia, as Nap Eyes have just written their second nearperfect album. Musically, I hear a lot of the Velvet Underground, although they've peeled back a lot the experimental touches in favor of crisper notes to leave listeners with a more accessible sound. Lyrically, you'll hang on every word, rejoicing in the poetic quality of Nigel Chapman's words. We live in a musical landscape of singles

and hits, but what Nap Eyes continue to provide is a cohesive piece of art that surprises and succeeds at every musical turn. Music like this is meant to be digested over long spans of time, and luckily for you, the quality of this act allows for you to return to it over and over, discovering new joys with each visit. ★

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall



LISTEN TO:
Delirium and Persecution
Paranoia

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Kevin Morby Whitney Advance Base Yonatan Gat



Shannon and The Clams

Oakland, CA

Oakland based retro-rock power band Shannon and The Clams create a combination of lo-fi garage rock and vintage doo wop, complete with the 50s look and vibe. ★

Nasa Hadizadeh, Alt Citizen



LISTEN TO:
Point of Being Right

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Cosmonauts](#)

[Night Beats](#)

[NOBUNNY](#)

[Grape St.](#)

Mumdance

London, UK-England



Along with frequent partner Logos, Mumdance helped to define the *weightless* sound. It's a new strain of cerebral grime music that's more focused on building tension than letting it release. Weightless is defined by its lack of obvious rhythmic structure, its abstract sound design and its occasionally violent, three-dimensional sound effects that can lend it a deceptively powerful edge. Mumdance's take on the sound is especially arresting, full of stop-start thrusts, pounding percussive devices and gleaming synth work, which has made him one of modern grime's definitive names, whether he's making instrumentals or working with MCs like Novelist. ★

Andrew Ryce, Resident Advisor

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Korma

Celestial Trax

Ghetts

DJ Spinn



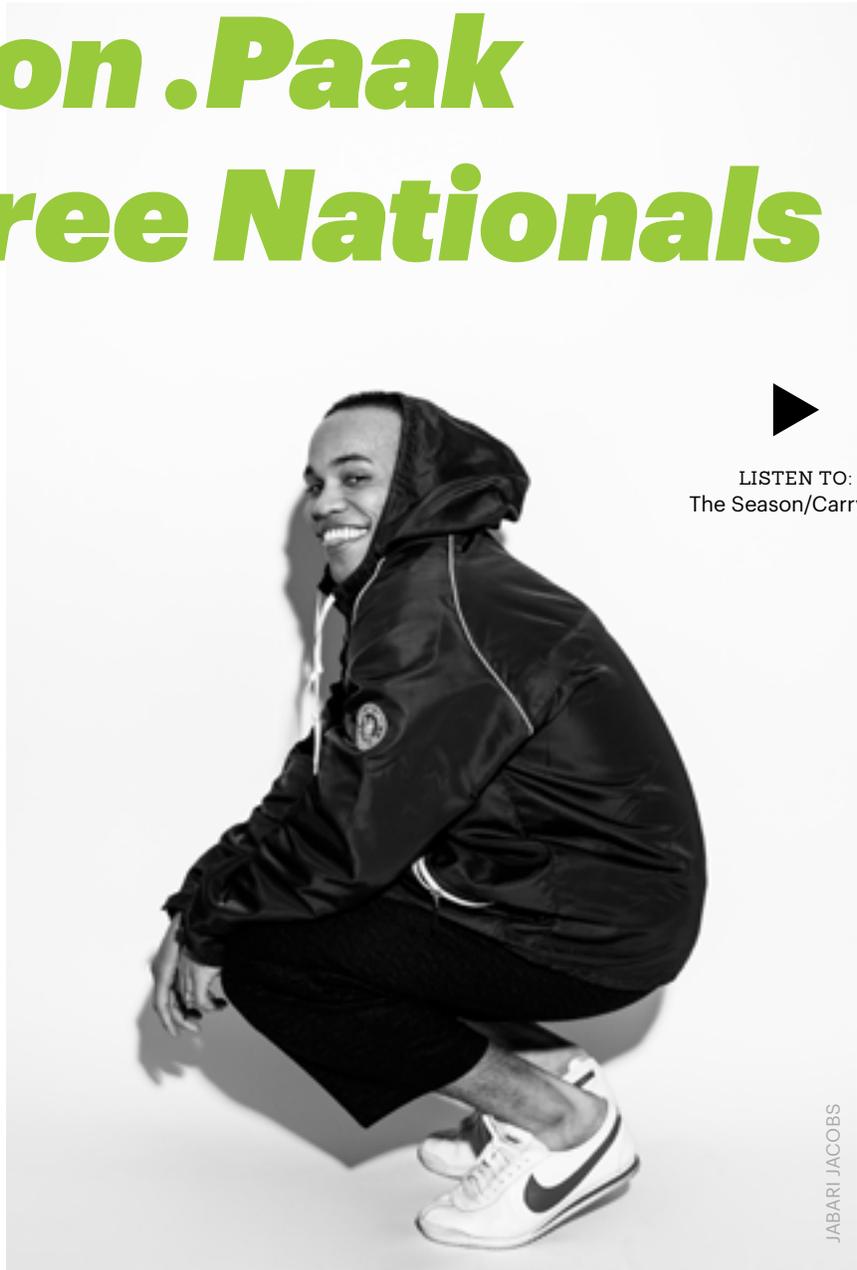
LISTEN TO:
Big Slug

Anderson .Paak & The Free Nationals

Oxnard, CA

Anderson .Paak popped up on music industry radars in a major way when he appeared all over Dr. Dre's *Compton* album. It was a huge look for a relatively low-profile artist, but .Paak quickly proved that he's more than just "that guy on the Dre album." His new album *Malibu* is one of the best projects of the year so far, and his performances are filled with fresh soul and positive energy. To many new fans, .Paak appears to be just getting started, but he's been putting in work for years and has dealt with plenty of hardships, including being homeless. At 30 years old, he's ready for the spotlight. ★

Jacob Moore, Pigeons and Planes



LISTEN TO:
The Season/Carry Me

JABARI JACOBS

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

NxWorries

Boulevards

Jahkoy

PJ



PrOfiles

Los Angeles, CA

BETH STERNBAUM

PrOfiles has captured hearts a plenty with their dark synth pop. The glitz and glam of Los Angeles, their home, bejewel the duo's smoldering sound. I was first lured into their music by Lauren's voice on a demo, its astonishing perfection stopping me dead in my tracks. PrOfiles' songs, which they once described as being about "sex addiction, hypnotherapy, and love", are grandly sweeping tales of desire and heartbreak, at times coated in dark disco and glazed with the unbridled luxuriance of the 80's. PrOfiles just released a debut album, which premiered on Billboard. *Jurassic Technologie* is easily my favorite debut of the year thus far, and its rousing passion is sure to ignite like fireworks on stage. ★



LISTEN TO:
Empty Hands

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Formation

Bearson

Antoine93

GGOOLLDD

Amy Huang, We Found New Music

Lydia Loveless

Columbus, OH



Not to be hyperbolic, but after Lydia Loveless' 2014 album *Somewhere Else* it became clear that she's the heir to Lucinda Williams' country throne. In her short career she's written two albums that are so full of grit and emotion it's hard to believe she's not already honky-tonk royalty. Her mix of vulnerability and frankness has already gotten her praise from legends like Richard Hell and with her outlaw sensibilities it's easy to see why. ★

Hannah Angst, The Wild Honey Pie



LISTEN TO:
To Love Somebody

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Robert Ellis
Jenifer Jackson
Ciaran Lavery
Torgeir Waldemar

Cullen Omori

Chicago, IL



▶
LISTEN TO:
Cinnamon

ALEXA LOPEZ

Cullen Omori, a beloved member of the Chicago music scene, has announced the details of his new project, the very project he alluded to at the final Smith Westerns show. The same project that has been whispered about since he signed with Sub Pop Records. The album is called *New Misery* and it will be released on March 18th. BestNewBands.com got a preview of his new music at his show last November. Omori said the songs he was playing were

in a particular order, hinting at a track listing for his upcoming album. He also referred to one song as something that could be considered a single. The catchy tune showed off his knack for writing solid pop songs. Despite never hearing the song before, people swayed along and a few even sang along with the chorus, "You taste like cinnamon." ★

Sarah Hess, Best New Bands

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Satellie Stories](#) [Sunflower Bean](#) [All Dogs](#) [Fear of Men](#)



ZACH TICKES

Sorority Noise

Hartford, CT

In a genre full of lyricists straining to be clever, Cameron Boucher actually pulls it off. Sorority Noise's frontman spends most of last year's fantastic *Joy, Departed* slinging vivid, self-deprecating lines that make an instant impression, from "I want to be the water in your lungs that lets you know you are drowning" to "If you asked me how I feel about myself, I'd ask you that right back and expect a pause."

His Hartford-based band matches those powerful addiction narratives with melodically charged guitar music, veering through an ambitious array of styles without ever losing sight of its pop foundations. Those pining for alternative radio's mid-'90s glory days could not do much better than this. ★

Chris DeVille, Stereogum

▶
LISTEN TO:
Using

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Pinkwash Los Nastys Regrettes Peeland-Z



Lower Dens

Baltimore, MD



LISTEN TO:
To Die In L.A.

Ever since Jana Hunter started the band in 2010, Baltimore's Lower Dens have possessed one of the most singular and unique voices in independent rock music, a complex assortment of steel-grey post punk, icy synth pop, and sleek motorik grooves that serve a profound and cerebral lyricism. A style established on 2010 debut *Twin Hand Movement* and further refined on both 2012's *Nootropics* and last year's *Escape From Evil*, Lower Dens transform clever key changes and lush productions into stunning superpositions: bittersweet songs of human conflict, of people torn between anxiety and desire, agency and confusion, each cathartic chorus braced with a humbling revelation about the human condition. At the center of it all is Jana's voice, implacable and endlessly evoking, guiding us carefully to each new plateau. Don't miss 'em.



Adam Devlin, Tiny Mix Tapes

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[The Tontons](#) [Sons of an Illustrious Father](#) [Riothorse Royal](#) [Quiet Kids](#)

HÆLOS

London, UK-England



LISTEN TO:
Earth Not Above

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Gilligan Moss

Marc E. Bassy

LEX

Chaos Chaos



Arthur Delaney, Dom Goldsmith and Lotti Benardout, the young Londoners and new Matador Records signees that make up HÆLOS, describe their sound as “dark euphoria.” With atmospheric sonic landscapes rooted in trip-hop and rich vocal dynamics that don’t shy away from anthemic harmony, HÆLOS makes a case for drama-driven electronica as a mass appeal offering, not to be spun solely at the elite after-parties of the coolest of cool, but everywhere. Early singles like “Earth Not Above” and “Pray” merge the sharp, tactile sounds of 90s UK pirate radio with deft pop songwriting that’s urgent and hard to ignore. If you’re thinking Jamie xx, you’re close, but HÆLOS are indeed a little darker and somehow also a little more euphoric – and it’s working for them. ★

Adrian Maseda, All Things Go

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Jamal Woon

Saba

BOSCO



LISTEN TO:
Weight In Gold

Gallant

Los Angeles, CA

Numerous artists have been redefining what R&B music means over the last few years, but few have delivered a take as powerful as Gallant's. After slowly making moves in his hometown of Los Angeles, 2015 saw the crooner establish his presence in a big, big way. Singles like the stunning "Weight in Gold" and the slinking "Talking in Your Sleep" showcase accessible, captivating hooks that never eclipse the heights of his mesmeric vocal abilities.

Meanwhile, a dreamy cover of Foo Fighters' "Learn to Fly" and a tour with Sufjan Stevens that resulted in a unique collaboration demonstrated his incredible crossover appeal. With just a handful of releases, Gallant has already garnered significant industry attention; having just recently finished work on his debut full-length, great things are right around the corner for the next big name in R&B. ★

Ben Kaye, Consequence of Sound



LISTEN TO:
Trouble In Paradise



Tele Novella

Austin, TX

Forged from the remnants of Agent Ribbons and Vox trot, Tele Novella had significant buzz the moment they emerged in Austin. But with their debut full length on the way and a dazzling number of incredible singles under their belt, 2016 will likely be the year that the rest of the country catches on to the magic of this super stylish group. The band's knack for mixing swampy rhythms and kitschy sonics like a '60s rather than '70s forged B-52s has made them one of the most exciting live presences in Texas, but it's Natalie Ribbons' voice that makes them so irresistible, spooky and seductive and melancholic all at once. Listeners who are bored by bespectacled indie rock bros may just find their spirits rejuvenated after encountering Tele Novella. ★

Morgan Davis, OVRLD

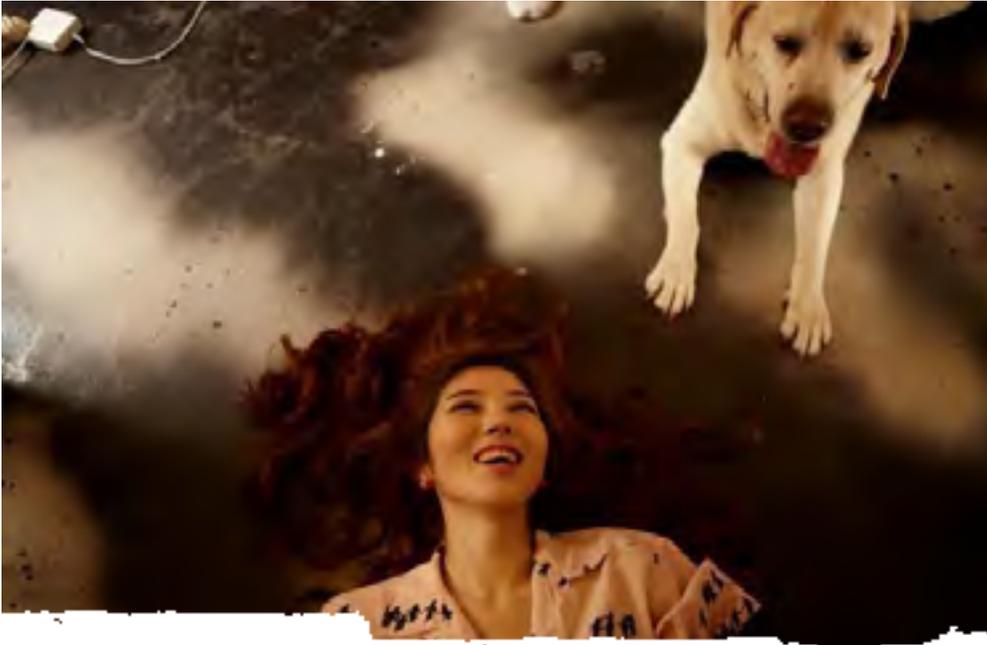
YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Faith Healer

Dead Gaze

Tamarron

Heaters



Neon Bunny

Seoul, South Korea

When Neon Bunny releases new music, it's a window into her unique soundscape. Her electro-pop songs are perfection and always require repeat plays. Focusing on strong melodies layered over expertly arranged beats, Neon Bunny invites you into her world. Each single is a teaser into what could easily become a classic album in the electronic genre worldwide. ★

Chris Park, Korean Indie



LISTEN TO:
It's You

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

East of My Youth

Ela Minus

Grenda



Miya Folick

Los Angeles, CA



LISTEN TO:
I Got Drunk

Miya Folick straddles the mystic folk and grunge-pop worlds, although she has rightly referred to her music in interviews as “post-genre.” Her *Strange Darling* EP lacks nothing in lyrical heft or mesmerizing atmospheric; she sings like an old soul in a cherub’s body, her voice ebbing from plaintive to authoritative as guitars hum and rumble. Folick was reared in Orange County, California, in a Buddhist household (some of her songs put the “chant” in

chanteuse), and she studied classical music and spent time in New York before returning home and turning to the guitar. In that, she has found a vehicle for her smart confessionals, which reveal a knack for turning simple observations into big metaphors, as well as some nifty lyrical sleight-of-hand. ★

Kevin Bronson, Buzzbands LA

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Into It. Over It.](#) [Margaret Glaspy](#) [Walker Lukens](#) [Paul Bergmann](#)

Exmortus

Whittier, CA



LISTEN TO:
Relentless

Prosthetic Records recording artists Exmortus blend technical virtuosity with equal parts melodic thrash and savage death metal brutality resulting in a fine-tuned metallic assault that fires on all cylinders. Fresh off a Stateside tour with Enforcer, Cauldron and Warbringer; the four-piece from Whittier, California promises to be a heavy highlight of this year's SXSW. ★

Robert Williams, Metal Rules

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Dead Earth Politics](#) [Chemical Burn](#) [Take Over and Destroy](#) [More To Monroe](#)



PARTYBABY

Los Angeles, CA

Brash, in-your-face punk with its arms aloft and its brains on the floor. Partybaby want music to be fun, otherwise what's the point? That's their perspective. Members have previous experience (Noah Gersh used to be in Portugal. The Man, while Jamie Schefman has engineered for bands including 30

Seconds to Mars), and they wanted to start afresh with a project that's exciting, all-embracing and anything but alienating. So far it's paying off. "Everything's All Right" and "Your Old Man" are as strong as opening gambits come. ★

Jamie Milton, DIY

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Pinact Worriers Sorority Noise Nai Harvest



LISTEN TO:
Oh My

Boogie

Compton, CA

If you haven't been on to Boogie yet, it's well about time, and his forthcoming SXSW gig should set the perfect backdrop. The Compton-based rapper has been a favorite throughout the blogosphere as well as here at the Complex offices since he released his debut mixtape *Thirst 48* back in 2014, a refreshingly cohesive project that showcased a grounded flow over laid-back production. Following the project's success, he dropped an excellent follow up *The Reach*, collaborated with artists such as Jahlil Beats and SBTRKT, and signed with Interscope Records. Though Boogie's kept relatively quiet so far this year, expect his set in Austin to be anything but. ★

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Cozz

Tunji Ige

Ras G & The Koreatown Oddity

Open Mike Eagle

Lauren Nostro, Complex

Lewis Del Mar

Rockaway Beach, NY



One of the best new bands going into 2016 is Lewis Del Mar, a moody, electronic rock/pop duo with a magic touch. Lewis Del Mar is equally indie rock, with electric and acoustic instrumentation, and contemporary, electronic R&B. The soulful element comes mostly from the band's vocalist, who has a tone that is more blues-based than anything, albeit whatever blues sounds like coming from Rockaway

Beach, New York in 2015. Their lyrics are accompanied by mysterious guitar and computer melodies, interplaying as naturally as I've ever heard before. The end result is sultry, internal and still danceable - Lewis Del Mar has everything exactly right from square one. ★

Kevin McStravick, Operation Every Band

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

CALLmeKAT Jane Weaver AudioDamn! Strangers You Know

Hooton Tennis Club

Liverpool, UK-England

In a sea of synth tinged indie pop, it's wildly refreshing to hear scuzzy done as well as Liverpool's Hooton Tennis Club. With a mix of jangling guitars, speak-sing vocals and rambling melodies, the band brings to mind the heyday of lo-fi indie. Their debut *Highest Point in Cliff Town* is wall-to-wall charming riffs that would sound at home next to previous SXSW breakout Palma Violets, but with the kind of mundane musing of Parquet Courts. It's messy, loud and fucking fun. ★



STEVE GULLICK

Hannah Angst, The Wild Honey Pie



LISTEN TO:
Jasper

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Lusts
Good Field
Night Dials
CeaseTone



LISTEN TO:
Hurтин' (On The Bottle)

ANGELINA CASTILLO FOR THIRD MAN

Margo Price

Nashville, TN

If there's an heir apparent to the throne of Loretta Lynn, it's Margo Price. The first country artist signed to Jack White's Third Man Records, Margo Price is one of the most buzzed about acts to come out of Nashville in a long time, with outlets like The FADER and The New Yorker singing her praises (The New Yorker pulled no punches in their endorsement of Price, titling their piece, simply, "Listen to Margo Price"). Price's deeply confessional writing is reminiscent of Lynn and other female forebears Tammy

Wynette and Dolly Parton, but also remains decidedly modern, never crossing that line that sends so many traditional skewing country artists into gimmick territory. Her debut *Midwest Farmer's Daughter* is full of instant classics like the Caitlin Rose co-write "Hurтин' (On the Bottle)," songs that should, one day, earn Price her own place as country music royalty. ★

Brittney McKenna, The Bluegrass Situation

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

The Cactus Blossoms Motel Radio Corb Lund Jason James



RP Boo

Chicago, IL

Chicago native RP Boo, aka Kavain Space started out on his musical journey as a member of house and juke dance clique House-O-Matics, DJing alongside DJ Deon and DJ Milton before being taught the production ropes by the legendary DJ Slugo. He has become one of footwork's founding fathers, kickstarting the genre in 1997 with his self released track "Baby Come On," which saw an Ol



LISTEN TO:
Heavy Heat

Dirty Bastard sample traverse over ruff and rocky syncopated drums. Keeping up a consistent output ever since, he has remained core to the scene, releasing his unique brand of paranoid and spooky-as-fuck tracks across labels such as Planet Mu, Adult Swim and Honest Jon's. ★

Natalie Davies, Dummy Mag

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Spurz DJ Clent Tripletrain Cakedog



ALEX R. KIRZHNER

Transviolet

Los Angeles, CA

Transviolet are an L.A.-based foursome that traffic in noir cinematic pop. Punctuated by singer Sarah McTaggart's star-level alto, TV ably blend wide-appeal pop melodies with artful production choices and inventive instrumental turns. The band first gained blogosphere attention this past summer with online hit "Girls Your Age" which was quickly followed on by equally buzzy anthems "New Bohemia" and "Bloodstream". An electric January appearance on the *Late Late Show With James Corden* proved too that the band were not to be missed in a live setting. Go see them. ★

Mike Clemenza, Blah Blah Blah Science



LISTEN TO:
New Bohemia

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Milk & Bone
Violet Skies
Tuskha
Zyna Hel

Freedom Fry

Los Angeles, CA



DANIEL TOPETE

“The Wilder Mile” was the very first song I fell in love with by Freedom Fry, and at the time, the French/American duo based out of sunny Los Angeles was already two EPs deep into their project. Bruce and Marie’s band name is a play on French US relations during the Iraq war, but there’s nothing stoic about their music. Freedom Fry’s sing along ready blend of folk, rock, and pop is full of sun kissed vitality.

Songs like “Shaky Ground (Na Na Na),” “Yeah You,” and “21” are handsomely genuine, and that jangling candor carries over plentifully in Freedom Fry’s performances. You’ll leave their show feeling like you’ve become the best of friends with the now married couple. ★

Amy Huang, I Heart Moosiq



LISTEN TO:
The Words

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Library Voices Close Talker Royal Canoe Fast Romantics



LISTEN TO:
Frail Love

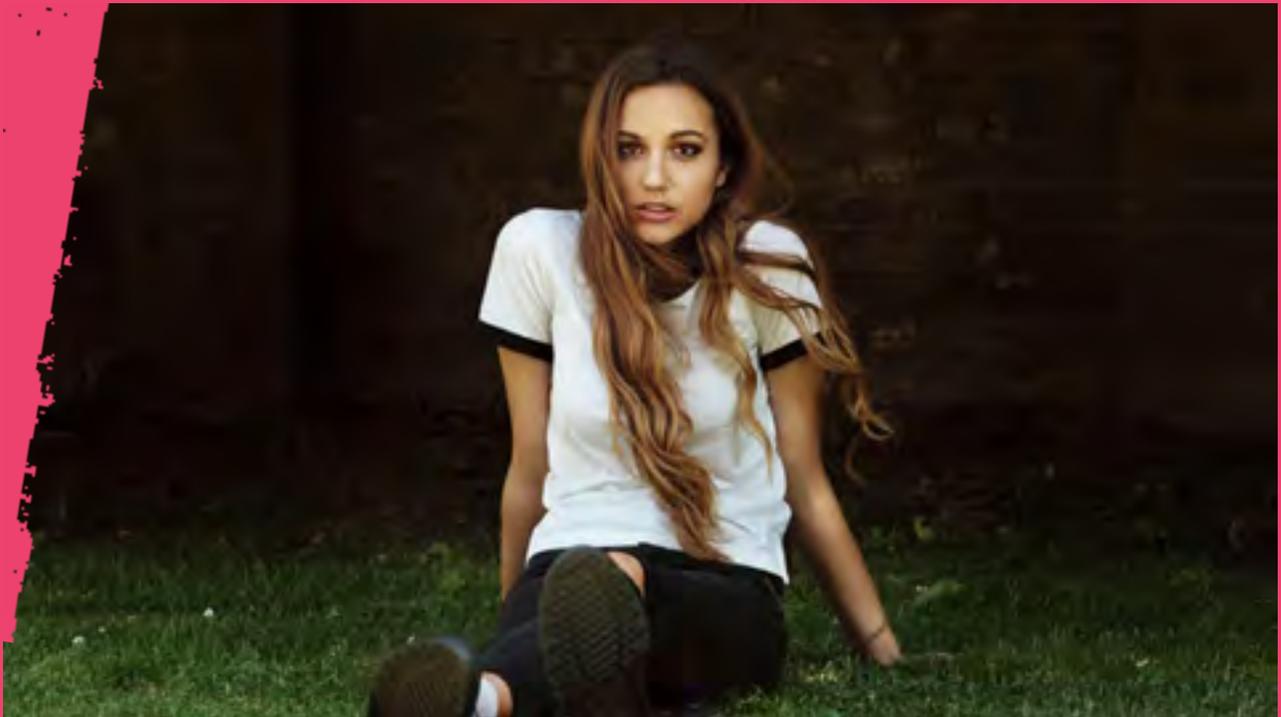
YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Rozi Plain

Globelamp

James TW

Sara Ontaneda



CLOVES

Melbourne, Australia

Cloves represents everything SXSW has always represented. She's a young Australian artist making huge waves with her *XII* EP and she now has the chance to win over new audiences with what we can only expect will be stunning performances. I caught wind of her music via "Frail Love," which was merely a piano backbone built to let her voice shine and rise...and it did. Her music is built for those who will fawn over the power of the voice; I've heard her compared to the likes of Billie and Ella, and she's not even 20 years old. She's being given the opportunity of a lifetime, from the same place that made Amy Winehouse a household name. You owe it to yourself to stop in and see what all the fuss is about, as the next time you hear about her is likely to be from the back row at the largest club in your hometown. Looking for something timeless? Look no further. ★

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall



LISTEN TO:
Indulge

JONES

London, UK-England

While JONES may seem distant and cold due to the glazing production on her tracks, it's her soulful voice that will definitely make you feel warm on the inside. Glistening over a minimalistic beat, all of the attention goes to her voice & lyrics, an approach she emphasizes with a stunning live performance. Production comes from London's most sought-after producers like Rodaidh McDonald (Adele, The xx) and A. K. Paul (Jai Paul's brother). Classic songwriting in a modern jacket. ★

Jarri Van der Haegen, Disco Naïveté



YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Tiffany Parker
Jocelyn Alice
Tish Hyman
That Poppy

Grizfolk

Los Angeles, CA



LISTEN TO:
Troublemaker

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Benj Rose
Cold Fronts
Pearl Charles
Folks



I was lucky enough to see Grizfolk at their very first live show in a basement bar in Venice Beach. My memory of the night may be on the hazy side but the impression they left on me was crystal clear. These guys were the real deal. They've been in full time grind mode since then, honing their sound and their stage act as they toured the world. Even though I've seen them at least 10 more times since that first show, I won't be missing their SXSW set. With their debut album just recently released I can only imagine the celebratory treat we are all in for. ★

Brandon Bogajewicz, The Burning Ear



DJ Paypal

Berlin, Germany

DJ Paypal represents footwork's newest guard. He and his Mall Music crew mix the soulfulness of their Teklife associates—think DJ Rashad and Spinn—with a more modern, glossier and internet-savvy approach, incorporating everything from up-to-the-minute rap songs to Drexciyan electro. On his own

records, like last year's *Sold Out*, he's shown off a dexterity for chopping up old jazz and funk, while his DJ sets are a tour de force through every flavour of footwork. ★

Andrew Ryce, Resident Advisor



LISTEN TO:
Ladies Night

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

DJ Teye CYBER69 Gianni Lee Javi



LISTEN TO:
Walk With Me (Ft. KUCKA)



SAM WHITESIDE

Cosmo's Midnight

Sydney, Australia

Sydney based twins and producer duo Cosmo's Midnight was among the lead pack that set the tone for the surge of uplifting and experimental sunset beats that came out of Australia in late 2012. Their remix of Flume's "Sleepless" made that evident. Their 2013 EP, *Surge*, put the twins' production skills in the limelight. Its dreamy and bubbly progressions won them nods and a lineup spot at Lis-

ten Out that same year. Since then, they've kept up with the chilled out motives but have added livelier stylizations as can be heard in their single "Falling Out feat. Lido" or "Walk with Me feat. KUCKA". Suffice it to say, their sound continues to evolve for the better. ★

Ali Jafari, Control+Alt+Delight

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Cosmo Sheldrake Monogem Pillar Point Wave Racer

ESDLCP

Santiago, Chile

CAROLINA AGUIERO



LISTEN TO:
Shineless

Chile's El Sueño De La Casa Propia (ESDLCP) is low-key one of the most inventive and intriguing electronic artists working in Latin America, or anywhere. Producer José Manuel Cerda has a remarkable gift for shattering familiar sounds, such as marimba or the human voice, only to reassemble them into dazzling and often surprisingly danceable sonic mosaics. Precise yet organic, his compositions tease the brain even as they soothe the ears. The wistful name, which means "the dream of owning one's own home," feels right for his enchanting sounds and also echoes Cerda's unlikely storybook biography: A turbulent childhood in Valparaíso gave way to a career as an experimental musician in Santiago and, eventually, well-deserved international recognition. ★

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Sotomayor](#)

[Doomsquad](#)

[Celadon City](#)

[Coldair](#)

Beverly Bryan, Soundfriend

Kari Faux

Little Rock, AR

It's been a minute since we've heard from Kari Faux. The Little Rock based rapper and producer has been making waves for a while with her authentic flow and hypnotic beats. She truly took off with her *Laugh Now, Die Later* mixtape in 2014, which garnered a feature from Childish Gambino and some impressive internet-inspired visuals which we premiered here at Complex. Since then, she's kept us all on our toes by slowly teasing her forthcoming *Lost En Los Angeles* album with fuego singles "Nada" and "Supplier." With the anticipation reaching its peak, we're closer to new music than ever before, and with any luck it could be here before Kari hits the SXSW stage in March. But even if *Lost En Los Angeles* doesn't drop before then, there's absolutely no doubt that she's still gonna bring the "futuristic fire." Expect it to be on full display during her set in Austin. ★

Lauren Nostro, Complex

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Taylor Bennett
The Last Artful, Dogdr
Visto
Cash Lansky





YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

WolfBrain

Amplified Heat

Waco Brothers

The Wans

Matthew Logan Vasquez



LISTEN TO:
Personal

Austin, TX

You likely already know Matthew Logan Vasquez's music. For the last decade, he's been the gravely-voiced frontman of Delta Spirit. After four albums with DS and one with the supergroup Middle Brother, he finally went solo with November's *Austin* EP. The release sees Vasquez fully indulging in his rock 'n' roll songwriting desires, digging in on the 17-minute low-burning title track while recalling growing up in Austin, TX, and letting it rip on the sweaty rocker "Everything I Do is Out". In February, he dropped his debut LP, *Solicitor Returns*, a record epitomizing the Americana journeyman he's always been. Nearly every instrument on the album was played by his hands alone, making it the purest representation of Vasquez the Musician we've ever heard. Watching his rowdy, full-throttle delivery of these songs live, it's clear: Music's in this man's blood. ★

Ben Kaye, Consequence of Sound

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

SassyBlack

Horsepowar

Russ

Jay Prince



LISTEN TO:
blkjuptr

Smino

St Louis, MO

St. Louis bred, Chicago-based rapper Smino has next. He's a nimble spitter with a knack for rapid-fire flows, catchy hooks, and dynamic melodies. In 2016, it's not enough to just be able to rap well—Smino is a multi-faceted artist, and he's got a secret weapon in his partnership with producer Monte Booker, who adds a unique, electronically informed aesthetic to the Smino soundscape. The next step: converting those vibes into a live show. Outside of Chicago, not many fans have had a chance to find out what a Smino performance is all about. We'll find out soon enough. 🌟

Jacob Moore, Pigeons and Planes



Astronauts, etc.

Oakland, CA

It should come as no surprise that the man behind the music of Astronauts, etc is also a touring member of Toro y Moi's band. You'll likely hear huge similarities in the craftsmanship, playing upon a love for silky R&B grooves and angular guitar stabs to flesh out a bit of funk in this set of tunes. Perhaps what's most noticeable is the musicianship of songwriter Anthony Ferraro, a songwriter who once studied at UC Berkley; you'll find incredible development over his earliest demos and his most recent release *Live Out Wondering*, meant to capture his band's unity, rather than a mere studio project. It's great to see someone rediscover their love of playing music all over again, which shines in almost every note put into Ferraros's work. Just imagine yourself falling in love in outer space whilst the echoes of Motown billow into the galaxies...this is what you'll find when you listen to Astronauts, etc. ★



LISTEN TO:
[I Know](#)

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

- And The Kids
- Beißpony
- Zookeeper
- Cian Nugent

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall



SHAWN LACHAPPELLE

Prince Rama

New York, NY



LISTEN TO:
Bahia

Imagine being unstuck in time. Not in that mental trauma-inducing sense, but actually being unable to latch onto a specific time. What would you do? Taraka and Nimai Larson, the sisters who make up Prince Rama, answer that question by making music from what they see, using whatever instruments they have at their disposal. While their 2012 album *Top 10 Hits At the End of the World* invokes different takes of apocalyptic pop that embraces,

transcends, or ignores a fiery fate, their recently-released album *Xtreme Now* travels in time from the 12th century to 2067, anchored in the hope of New Wave and the hedonism of 70s pop and rock, and backed by complex rhythms that bring it all to life on stage. ★

Sean Brady, Tiny Mix Tapes

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Al Lover](#) [Saxsyndrum](#) [Blanck Mass](#) [Bill Converse](#)



Honne

London, UK-England

“Honne” in Japanese (本音) means “true feelings,” so it’s an appropriate moniker if you’re in the business of soul music. The London-based duo dispatched their debut single, “Warm on a Cold Night,” in September 2014. A refreshing departure from the British electronic/soul trend of icy minimalism and despair, “Warm on a Cold Night” employs velvety synths and cozy sentiment to catchy effect. In January 2015, Honne released their *Gone Are the Days* EP, a further exploration of funky, sultry electro- infused love songs. The EP’s standout track is “No Place Like Home” featuring London indie singer JONES – it’s a yearning expression of homesickness over an ethereal R&B instrumental, and it proves once again that true feelings definitely have a role to play in modern music. ★



LISTEN TO:
All In The Value

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Khai

flor

Justine Skye

Adrian Maseda, All Things Go

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Wildhoney

Tinnarose

EVDW (Edgar Van De Wingard)

Younghusband



LISTEN TO:
You Can't Always
Be Liked

Expert Alterations

Baltimore, MD

There's a purity in the songwriting of Expert Alterations that's based on tradition...a tradition born in the 80s with labels like Sarah Records and the C86 Tapes. You'll hear deep, throbbing bass lines, jangling guitar chords and a rolling rhythm that have you tapping your toes while swooning to the tones of the vocal delivery. Perhaps one of the band's finest points is their celebration of the joyousness that accompanies great songwriting; they're having fun playing while you're having fun listening. Their 2015 album, *You Can't Always Be Liked*, might just be one of the most complete pieces of jangle pop music that's come out in some time. Celebrate the vibrant fun that can be had when everything feels just right. ★

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall



LISTEN TO:
Cosmonaut

Benjamin Damage

Swansea, UK-Wales

After emerging from the shadow of his one-time collaborator Doc Daneeka, Benjamin Damage has become the definitive artist of Modeselektor's beloved—and now departed—50 Weapons imprint. He embodies the label's approach to techno: big on volume and brute power, but even bigger on

melody and emotion. Full of plush synth textures and engaging drum work, like the kind he showed off on his most recent album *Obsidian*, Benjamin Damage's taste in techno makes him a favourite of genre diehards and dilettantes alike. ★

Andrew Ryce, Resident Advisor

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Black Asteroid rRoxymore Cinnaman Negative Gemini



LISTEN TO:
Multiestabilidad



ALEXANDER HUNG

Algodón Egipcio

Mexico City, Mexico

Cheky Bertho, known to fans of lo-fi electronic pop as Algodón Egipcio, has been a critical and cult favorite in and out of the Spanish-speaking world, since the release of his 2011 debut *La Lucha Constante*. The Mexico City-based producer's breezy, moody tracks split the difference between tunefulness and experimentation and have drawn comparisons to El Guincho and Panda Bear. The newly released and long awaited second LP *La Confianza*

Ciega finds him introducing danceable, Afro-Caribbean inspired rhythms and a new polish to his lilting melodies. The lyrics, in contrast, are pensive and even mournful, perhaps a reflection of the turmoil in his native Venezuela. Taken as a whole, it's a magnificent return and well worth the wait. ★

Beverly Bryan, Soundfriend

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

BEA1991 The Nimbus Ravish Momin FEE LION



After listening to their debut live album on repeat at work for a few years, I finally caught Bear Mountain live at SXSW in 2013. With a 1pm set time, I would have been pleased with a sunburnt crowd of hungover head-nodders but Bear Mountain rocked the hapless crowd into a rowdy party that instantly left that live album – and its association with work – in the dust. Now, hearing a Bear Mountain song instantly transports me back to that day when great music entered the real world and really sunk its teeth in. Exactly what a great live show should do. ★

Brandon Bogajewicz, The Burning Ear



LISTEN TO:
Badu

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

DZZ

Stolar

The Dumplings

Summer Heart

Guerilla Toss

New York, NY



Guerilla Toss have been knocking around the Boston and Brooklyn scenes since 2012, leaving a trail of legendarily rowdy shows in their wake. The red zone-pushing, skronked-out clangor they've been developing over the years finally clicks together in all its glory on *Eraser Stargazer*, their first full-length for DFA Records. It's a euphoric, transformative ride—vocalist Kassie Carlson's rabid proselytizing is placed front-and-center; every kitchen sink instrument is given space to breathe, whirring and clamoring like a late-stage game of Bop-It. Guerilla Toss make in-your-face chaos that refuses to be ignored, and the intensity of their sound makes for one hell of a dance party. ★

James Rettig, Stereogum



LISTEN TO:
[Polly's Crystal](#)

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Stardeath and White Dwarfs](#)

[Aloa Input](#)

[Your Friend](#)

[Elephant Stone](#)

▶
LISTEN TO:
Be The One

Dua Lipa

London, UK-England



British-Albanian Dua Lipa might share management with Lana Del Rey but she's artistically a polar opposite. Lipa's grown-up sound is a perfect unison of a commercial appeal with depth, character and feeling. A critic's pick for 2016, she's put out a clutch of well-crafted pop moments so far including the transcendent "Be The One", surely one of last year's best tracks. The UK rarely produces pop stars with such caliber and promise at such an early stage and Lipa could really be the real deal: a British match for Taylor, Katy and Rihanna. ★

Paul Bridgewater, The Line of Best Fit

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Caveboy

ROZES

Eyelid Kid

Cellars



LISTEN TO:
Bite Through Stone

Ceschi

New Haven, CT

Ceschi is a rapper out of Connecticut who founded the innovative indie label Fake Four Inc. with his brother David. He has a folk rap style, rapping and singing over laid back and layered production. In 2015 he released his most complete project to date, *Broken Bone Ballads*, that captures the musician exploring apathy, getting older, working class struggles, and his place in the music industry. In a genre known for boasting and hyperbole, Ceschi highlights the beauty and doubt everyday people deal with in their day-to-day lives. The album's production was handled by indie rap veteran Factor, who expands his vast sonic catalog into acoustic minimalism on the album. ★

Nathan Headden, Operation Every Band



TIM MANNLE

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Andy The Doorbum & Justin Aswell

Adée

Pell

Masego

Julien Baker

Memphis, TN



LISTEN TO:
Something

It doesn't take long for Julien Baker to steal your heart. Just a few seconds into a song and you can feel the pain and anguish in her blood as she sings. She released her affecting debut album *Sprained Ankle* this year and it garnered almost universal acclaim, so much so that she ended up opening for El Vy for some of their New York City shows this fall. The beauty of her music is that her live show is even more likely to tear you to shreds, leaving you with nothing but raw emotion, and a few tears streaking down your face. ★

Will Oliver, We All Want Someone To Shout For

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Liza Anne
Small Houses
Peppina
Tor Miller



JAKE CUNNINGHAM

Danny L Harle

London, UK-England

London native Danny L Harle is heralding a new era for the PC Music crew. Forget the plastic commercial jingles, the clever names, the overt desire to disturb — Danny’s just here to make you lift. All the bubblegum precision is still there in singles like “Broken Flowers” and “In My Dreams,” but it’s delivered with all the emotional subtlety of a classical composer (which, hey, Harle rolls with that crowd too). He’s already built an impressive catalog of micro-hits, with a sound that never lets its subversions get in the way of its good time. If visceral pop delivered with a maestro’s touch sounds like your fix, do yourself a favor and get on over to whatever stages Danny L Harle’s performing on this year. ★

Sam Goldner, Tiny Mix Tapes



MADS PERCH



LISTEN TO:
In My Dreams

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Meneo

Magic Is Real

Henrik The Artist

UNiiQU3

Pumarosa

London, UK-England



Back in September last year Pumarosa dropped one of the best debut singles you'll ever hear. More a mission statement than a song, the mighty 7-minute opus "Priestess" immediately announced the five-piece London band as something quite spectacular. Led by the majestic Isabel Munoz-Newsome, the band have only been around for 18

months but spent most of 2015 carving out a reputation for intense live shows and ended the year as one of hottest new bands in the UK. It's rock and roll with a proggy framework but a screaming, intense heart - something we just don't see very often. ★

Paul Bridgewater, The Line of Best Fit



LISTEN TO:
Priestess

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Vulkano Better Person Laura Carbone FEWS



ANDREW PICCONE

Diet Cig

New Paltz, NY



LISTEN TO:
Harvard

Captivating an audience is probably one of the most difficult things to do for any band, let alone a two-piece act consisting of little more than guitar and drums. But, have you seen Diet Cig? Alex Luciano takes the stage without a care in the world, eager to take the audience, any audience, by storm. She bounces from one point to another, frantically shredding her guitar and often hopping off partner Noah's drum kit. Imagine a hyperactive cheerleader fronting the hippest band on Earth, then imagine yourself being part of it, letting go of your inhibitions and dancing freely. Oh, and did I mention that their songs are as catchy as you'll find? Start with "Scene Sick," move into "Dinner Date," then let go of your cares as you dive into the world of this New Paltz duo. ★

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

- L.A. Witch
- Sharkmuffin
- Mitski
- White Reaper

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall

Mothers

Athens, GA

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Twin Limb

CLARA-NOVA

The Diamond Center

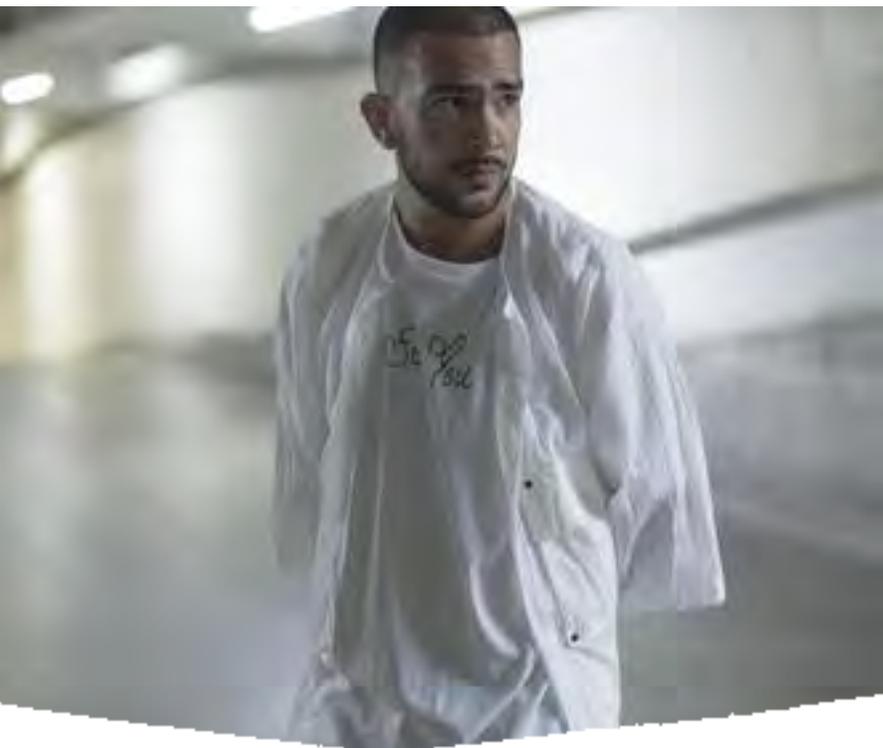
Young Rapids



LISTEN TO:
[It Hurts Until It Doesn't](#)

There's something pleasingly old-fashioned about Mothers. Their songs exude a timeless quality — dark, passionate swoons that have as much to do with Nirvana as Lana Del Rey. Throughout the Athens band's debut album *When You Walk A Long Distance You Are Tired*, Kristine Leschper wails and whimpers with authority, guiding listeners through creeping guitar-driven soundscapes so sparse that even the slightest melodic flourish hits like a gust of wind. Don't mistake the minimalism for a lack of rhythmic intensity, though; like their Georgia kinsmen and fellow indie-rock old souls Deerhunter, this band understands the power of a groove. And when sonic storms do gather, as on the propulsive "It Hurts Until It Doesn't" or the triumphant album closer "Hold Your Own Hand," Mothers have earned the bombast. ★

Chris DeVille, Stereogum



DONADO & MEXICAN JIHAD

N.A.A.F.I. (Zutzut, Lao, Mexican Jihad)

Mexico City, Mexico

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

GRRRL Iglooghost Emufucka Ritualz

Few collectives have married high and low culture in a way that's as trailblazing and fun as Mexico's N.A.A.F.I. The collective's members share a love for cutting edge electronic styles from across the globe, as well as boundless enthusiasm for the Latin urban rhythms that blast from every street corner in Latin America. Their music is a surefire party machine that blends dirty rhythms with textural and noisy samples to excellent results. LAO, Zutzut, Paul

Marmota, Omaar, and others are some of the most notable producers working in the crew, infiltrating other countries, throwing life-giving and inclusive parties, and even disrupting the art establishment (like when they played reggaeton during their residency at Museo Júmex, a modern art museum in Mexico City). ★

Marcos Hassan, Remezcla



LISTEN TO:
Mareo



LISTEN TO:
Monster Lead Me Home

Sara Hartman

Sag Harbor, NY

Moving from NY to Berlin, Sara Hartman put her emotions on paper and wrote “Monster Lead Me Home” – flash forward to today and it becomes her breakout debut single, fittingly, yet again, kickstarting a world tour. The toe-tapping band touch to Sara Hartman’s sound is what sets her apart from today’s typically pop landscape with its glossy productions – add to that her ability to really tell a story and you’ve got yourselves a bit of stellar Narnia-pop. ★

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

AKW

Ruby The Rabbitfoot

Victoria+Jean

Jarri Van der Haegen, Disco Naïveté

Sweet Spirit

Austin, TX



LISTEN TO:
Baby When I
Close My Eyes



SEAN DAIGLE

Sabrina Ellis' lifelong project A Giant Dog may have recently signed to Merge and thus be poised to take over the known indie universe, but if you weren't paying attention to her newer group Sweet Spirit last year, you've been missing out. Poppier and more introspective than the party heavy A Giant Dog, Sweet Spirit is also grander, more ambitious and eclectic, deviating from the classic '70s rock influences of AGD to offer up a constantly mutating vision of the same decade. Early supporter Britt Daniel has been vocal of his love for the band for a reason—they're quite possibly the closest anyone else in Austin has come to matching Spoon's songwriting chops. ★

Morgan Davis, OVRLD

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

The Sour Notes

Fotogramas

Savoir Adore

We Are The Grand



The Dead Ships

Los Angeles, CA



LISTEN TO:
Big Quiet

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Telegram The Pocket Rockets Tangerine Tracy Bryant

Fair or not, it's often said you can judge people by the company they keep. Thankfully for Los Angeles indie band The Dead Ships, that's a perfectly fine criterion as they've attracted some very noteworthy followers. After meeting at a show, Broken Social Scene's Brendan Canning agreed to produce TDS' debut EP, a duty he'd never taken on for any project not his own. Based on that six-track effort, they were hand picked to feature on this year's

Coachella lineup. Not bad for a band with no label or booking agent. But you don't garner those kinds of fans without having the music to back it up, and their soaring, howling garage rock is sure to prove them worthy of the attention. With a debut LP again produced by Canning due out later this year, The Dead Ships are certainly sailing. ★

Ben Kaye, Consequence of Sound



Gwenno

Cardiff, UK-Wales

There's a modern musical landscape, filled in by mass consumption and hurried songwriting, but this is not where you will find the work of Gwenno. The songwriter, formerly a member of the Pipettes, is fresh off a stellar year in which she released *Y Dydd Olaf*, a highly regarded concept album, written primarily in Welsh. While layers are built to rest upon one another, the soothing tones of the vocals elevate the songs above mere pop circumstance. She's rebuilding and blurring the lines between art and pop music, and you're not very likely to find many other musicians creating on her level. Every time you press play on her latest album, you'll be transported to the world where we recall the glory days of acts like Stereolab, but this time we're filled in with more backstory, more purpose. Gwenno is an artist you find when you're looking to get lost in the beauty of the mundane world. ★

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall



LISTEN TO:
Patriarchaeth

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Summer Twins

Cóndor Jet

Lionlimb

Vaadat Charigim

Tigertown

Sydney, Australia



ALEX TRACEY

There's nothing quite as endearing as a family band – Tigertown is the project of Australian husband and wife duo Chris (guitar) and Charlie Collins (lead vocals, synths), along with Chris' brother Alexi (keys) and sister Elodie (bass). At last year's SXSW they made a big splash with a jubilant, dance-ready sound and impressive performance chops. The beginning of 2016 found them readying a tour with St. Lucia and re-releasing debut EP *Lonely Cities*, a buoyant synth-soaked blast of uptempo anthems. The EP's second track, "Make It Real," is anchored by the lyric "somebody take me back so I can feel." One could imagine an easy answer to that request: Tigertown itself, a band that invites listeners to feel, and feel good. ★

Adrian Maseda, All Things Go



LISTEN TO:
Lonely Cities

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Joon Moon](#) [Alexx Mack](#) [Hibou](#) [Declan McKenna](#)

BOAN

Austin, TX



LISTEN TO:
MENTIRAS



Austin label Holodeck Records is full of remarkable acts, but BOAN stands out as perhaps their most crowd pleasing and palatable signing. A superduo combining José Cota and Mariana Saldaña, formerly of the seminal electronic trio Medio Mutante, BOAN is notable for bridging the dark, menacing

atmospherics of the bulk of Holodeck's roster, including Cota's current solo project ssleeperhold, with punk and pop attitude, making for music that is as suitable for a murder party as it is for dancing alone in your room. ★

Morgan Davis, OVRLD

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Mr. Kitty Supraman Holy Nothing INHALT



The Contortionist

Indianapolis, IN

The Contortionist are the leaders among a pack of young bands who mix modern metal with the prog masters of yesteryear; Yes, King Crimson and Pink Floyd among them. While it might seem odd that brutal breakdowns can co-exist with spacey atmospherics and extended, psychedelic jam outs, somehow The Contortionist make it work. ★

Ben Umanov, MetalSucks.net



LISTEN TO:
Language 1: Intuition

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[The Great Discord](#) [The Fine Constant](#) [Bongzilla](#) [Power Trip](#)



Methyl Ethel

Perth, Australia



LISTEN TO:
Twilight Driving

Pop music has been around for so long, that in order to capture audiences, you've got to warp the packaging a little bit, which is precisely what Methyl Ethel has done. They've got so many modern touchstones, pulling from psych, pop and other popular tropes that it's impossible to define their sound...that's the best compliment you can give any band in this day and age. You'll find touches of darkness contrasted against bright jangling guitars, drawing you into the world this Perth act have created for themselves. Listen to their track "Rogues" off their recent album, *Oh Inhumane Spectacle*, and you might find yourself a new favorite band. This is a musical experience you won't soon forget. ★

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Carroll

Part Time

Night Moves

Few Bits

Bel Heir

Philadelphia, PA

Philadelphia's Bel Heir mesmerizes their fans with a unique brand of gritty alternative pop. The band's ooey goeey music simmers and crackles, coaxing listeners to new heights of mellifluous intoxication. The smooth ease of Bel Heir's delivery belies the complexity of their sweltering sound, one as much influenced by hip-hop as it is by rock. Every member of the band has previously cultured his talent in the scene for an extended period of time before uniting to meticulously craft music together. Bel Heir is poised to take the world by storm with their pop-noir as they ready a full length. That album is well worth some major anticipation, if the dusty allure of Bel Heir's most infectious single "Kiss The Devil" is any indication of it, or rather, an early premonition. ★

Amy Huang, We Found New Music



LISTEN TO:
Too Cool



YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

SISTERS Talisco For Esmé Ember Island



Tijuana Panthers

Long Beach, CA

So-Cal garage outfit Tijuana Panthers bring the sun with their playful brand of surf rock. Their latest album *Wayne Interest* finds the California trio mixing trippy elements of punk, garage rock, and classic surf rock that blend well together for a sun-drenched cocktail. Their live performance is both groovy and head-bob inducing. Don't miss Tijuana Panthers. ★

Nasa Hadizadeh, Alt Citizen

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Guantanamo Baywatch

Hockey Dad

The Lemons

Pizza Time


LISTEN TO:
Set Forth

Eerie Wanda

Amsterdam, Netherlands



LISTEN TO:
Volcano Lagoon

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Acid Dad

Calliope Musicals

Blank Range

Big White



It's likely that the name Eerie Wanda hasn't entirely made a landing in the US yet, seeing as the project hails from the Netherlands, but be warned that this is possibly one of the more enchanting acts you'll see this year. Singer Marina Tadic has this sincerity in her lyrical content, giving a nod to classic vocalists from the hey-day of 60s pop music. There's a sultry quality to her voice, but it also seems so effortless and pure; it doesn't hurt that there's a distinctiveness that originates in her delivery of English. Be forewarned, while a simplicity lives on the surface of the songs, the musical elements were fleshed out by Jacco Gardner's highly talented backing band, adding a musicality that'll take your breath away. *Hum* is their most recent effort, and it seems like the perfect piece of music to share with your mom (or dad) just to show them that while you're really hip, you still care about great pop. ★

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall




LISTEN TO:
La Zone Oriental

Whitest Taino Alive

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

There's no question that Whitest Taino Alive's sweaty sex jams are a straight up riot. The Dominican trio's slang heavy, quisqueyano rhymes make locals roll over laughing and high five each other, while everyone outside the D.R. is left shaking their heads trying to decipher what it all means. Their debut, *¿Donde Jugarán Los Cueros?* boasted the perfect recipe for an out of control party, but it was 2015's self-titled EP that turned the intensity up a

notch. Although their thirst for smut was as present as ever, their musical execution reached a new level, establishing a sound that included booming 808s, crisp trap snares, Far East nods, gogo funk samples, and showed off a few more tricks up their sleeve. Surely they'll keep finding ways to get the party going. ★

Marcos Hassan, Remezcla

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Lng/SHT Jay IDK Aztek 732 MLKMN



LISTEN TO:
Sister of Pearl

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Amber Arcades
George Clanton
Night Drive
Coral Bones



Baio

London, UK-England

In 2010, Chris Baio, of Vampire Weekend fame, started a solo project endearingly named Baio to explore more electronic based productions. He's released 4 EPs and an album since 2012, each of which explores catchy and hopefully romantic dance-pop fronts with tinges of sonorous and seductive techno. "Missive" and "Mira" are prime examples. Recent tracks like "Sister of Pearl" and "Brainwash Yrr Face" off his debut album, *The Names*, see him playing more with indie inclinations that lean toward reflective electropop. It's hard not to miss the influence from the late David Bowie (RIP), Hot Chip, as well as his own band; though he trades the pep for haze and something that becomes uniquely his. ★

Joshua Chiang, Control+Alt+Delight

Pastel Ghost

Brooklyn, NY



LISTEN TO:
Clouds

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

DJDS

Deantoni Parks

Tel Cairo

Astronautica

CHAD KAMENSHINE

Brooklyn by way of Oakland transplant Vivian Moon makes fog enshrouded music as Pastel Ghost. The project's gossamer electronic pop music, which Vivian likes to call "dream rave", is clearly inspired by Crystal Castles. In fact, if we turned back the clock a few years, her music might have been categorized by some as "witch house". In 2015, Pastel Ghost released her debut album *Abyss*, a nebulous

exploration of solidarity and isolation. Live, her music is hypnotic, its swirling tendrils and whirring synths linger long within the room, merging into one another as a continuously heaving wave. Pastel Ghost's light show adds another immersive layer to this experience, giving her shows much performance art depth. ★

Amy Huang, I Heart Moosiq



Chicano Batman

Los Angeles, CA

▶
LISTEN TO:
Black Lipstick

Once the quirky name and matching pastel tuxedo shirts have your attention, LA's Chicano Batman reel you in with smooth, organ-laced psychedelic soul and stone-exquisite musicianship. The quartet's deep-seated reverence for vintage sounds from classic R&B to cumbia and Tropicália is very much in evidence, but they're no throwback band. On each of their songs, their varied influences shift and combine to create a kaleidoscopic back-

drop for frontman Bardo Martinez's heartfelt lyrics about contemporary Angeleno life. Told in English and Spanish, these stories are as memorable and vivid as the group's hummable melodies. Put it all together and what you have is the polar opposite of revivalism; it's timeless and utterly original. See them live. ★

Beverly Bryan, Soundfriend

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Los Detectives Helados](#) [Big Big Love](#) [Rubel](#) [Mon Laferte](#)

Bee's Knees

Los Angeles, CA



LISTEN TO:
Rumored To Be Real
(Ft. Marty Rod)



With one foot on the dance-floor and one foot in your pool, Bee's Knees are here to get you to put down your phone and join the party. They deal in the currency of good times and are more than happy to lend it to the world. No interest, no pretense, no attitude. They leave the posturing to the rest of the dance

scene as they let the music do the talking. But it's more moving than talking, unless you are swapping digits. In that case, talk away. They are happy to provide the soundtrack to whatever follows that too. ★

Brandon Bogajewicz, The Burning Ear

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Vindata Ishi Gent & Jawns

Slugabed

London, UK-England

CLEO GLOVER



LISTEN TO:
Living w/o U

Slugabed is a producer of epic proportions. His label Activia Benz is consistently eye-catching (thanks to molten hot artwork from the likes of Steve Smith) and is home to Sega Bodega, Toby Gale, IGLOOGHOST and more - staying true to their mantra of only releasing music they like and having a great time doing it. With a positively dazzling back catalog, Slugabed brings Pure El Nino Vibes to the party, often stepping out looking like an iced-out dreamboat en route to a P Diddy white party. ★

Natalie Davies, Dummy Mag

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Throwing Shade

Sega Bodega

Wiwek

Matrixxman



@4STRS

Louis the Child

Chicago, IL

Freddy Kennett and Robby Hauldren, more commonly known as Louis the Child, are poised to propel into super-stardom in 2016. Hailing from Chicago, the duo has an affinity for ever so perfectly pairing vocals alongside bouncy synths and punchy bass lines. The bulk of their releases up until recently have been remixes, yet it's important to note that the only original element of the songs used were the acapellas. The rest of the remix is built around brand new melodies and tones. Taking strong influence from hip-hop and R&B, Louis the Child has put their own synth-filled twist on a wide range of artists from Bombay Bicycle Club to Ty Dolla \$ign. At the ripe young ages of 17 and 18, LTC has already produced a smash hit with "It's Strange" featuring K.Flay. Watch them keep the momentum going this year with numerous tour dates, big festival slots, and a live set in the works.



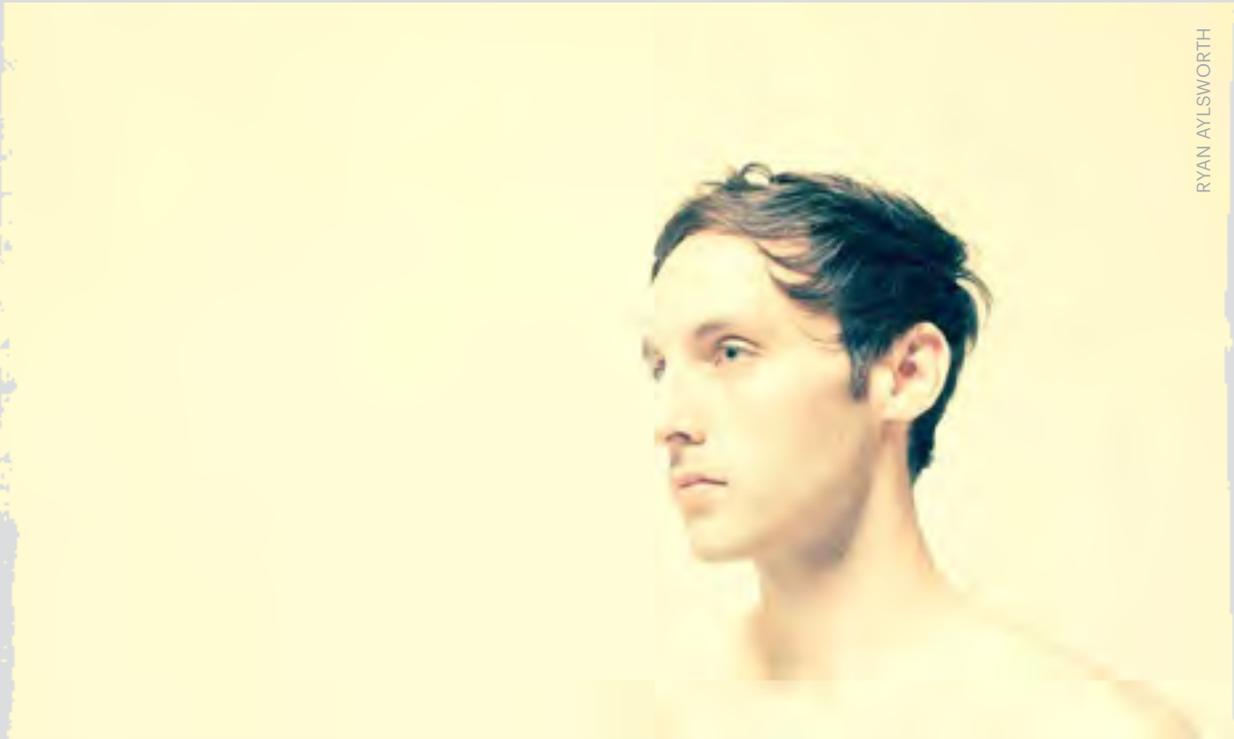
Reese Hayward, Control+Alt+Delight



LISTEN TO:
It's Strange

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Meishi Smile
Matthewdavid
The Blessings
NoMBe



James Supercave

Los Angeles, CA

Longtime favorites in L.A.'s Echo Park scene despite having released just one EP in four years, psych-pop quintet James Supercave finally lived up to expectations with February's release of the full-length *Better Strange* via Fairfax Recordings. It's an album of spectacularly odd angles, shifting time signatures, prickly guitars, dream-sequence lyrics and no small amount of post-modern malaise, all held together by frontman Joaquin Pastor's acrobatic, often-helium vocals. At their most infectious, James Supercave touches on Bowie-like glam and danceable spazz-pop, with detours to weighty matter like "Chairman Gou," a song about Terry Gou and the Foxconn suicides. ★

Kevin Bronson, Buzzbands LA



LISTEN TO:
Bum

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Harriet Brown

Japanese Breakfast

Living

New Madrid

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

BIRTHH

The Range

Sofie Winterson

PHASES



LISTEN TO:
You're Good But I'm
Better

Kill J

Copenhagen, Denmark

With so many electronic R&B and pop artists bursting out recently, it's increasingly imperative to have a unique and convincing voice, sonically and literally. Enter Kill J. Kill J's vocals are airy and at a high pitch, often manipulated with electronic will and ingenuity. Her latest single "Trickle Trickle" has a sample-like anti-chorus, dropping into a smooth synth-pop track, moving patiently like a calm grey

day. Kill J is ready to go anywhere and already has an airtight grip on her intended sound right out of the gate. SXSW will be her first US stage and already she falls into the must-see bucket - expect an accelerated trajectory for the Danish pop innovator in 2016. ★

Kevin McStravick, Operation Every Band



Metro Boomin

St. Louis, CA

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Insomniac Lamb\\$](#)

[Lil Uzi Vert](#)

[Chamothy The Great](#)

[Bleubird](#)

This one goes without saying, but we'll say it anyways. You just need to be at Metro's set.

The Atlanta-based 22 year old has been the brain and beats behind so much of your favorite music for a few years now everyone from Young Thug, Nicki Minaj, Travi\$ Scott, and Migos have looked to him for production assistance on some of their most hard-hitting tracks. Not even a quarter of the way through 2016, and kid's already scored production credits on some of the year's biggest records, including Future's "EVOL" and "Purple Reign," Tinashe's "Joyride" and Kanye West's "The Life of Pablo". He's not slowing down anytime soon, and if we're abiding by the prophecy that is Drake's Twitter feed; it's looking like Metro's contributions to *Views* could propel him to astronomical heights. All bets are off when it comes to possible surprise guests, but regardless, expect Metro's SXSW set to be a massive synthesis of the distinct sound he's helped cultivate and popularize. We can't really forge any reasonable explanation as to why you wouldn't be at his set- you want him to trust you, right? ★



LISTEN TO:
Nolo

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

[Phebe Starr](#)

[Sykes](#)

[Cappa](#)

[Coast Modern](#)

SHANE MCCAULEY

Grace Mitchell

Portland, OR

From a show-stopping high-stakes cover of Hall & Oates' "Maneater," to the frenetic club-ready banger "Jitter," it's clear that Grace Mitchell has many tricks up her sleeve. Her 2014 EP *Design* was an exercise in establishing a presence in the prestige pop chanteuse landscape, firmly in the Lorde and Lana aesthetic. But 2015 EP *Raceday* finds the singer experimenting wildly with the fractured strands of multiple pop (and hip-hop) eras. It seems that she's smartly decided to avoid committing to any direction too specific, too pigeonholing, or too boring. A multi-instrumentalist, lyricist, and burgeoning sonic engineer (she has her own recording studio in Portland, Oregon), Mitchell's vision and execution are assuredly her own, and they are extremely exciting. ★

Adrian Maseda, All Things Go



InAeona

Boston, MA



LISTEN TO:
Sun Moon

InAeona sound like what might happen if Morrissey had grown up listening to metal and 90s alt-rock instead of pop. Let the warmth of their spaced-out, heavy vibe surround you completely, and allow the entirety of vocalist Bridge's alternately vicious and soothing voice carry you along for a journey. ★

Ben Umanov, MetalSucks.net

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Lo-Pan Black Cobra Author & Punisher Lord Dying

Birdcloud

Nashville, TN



BEN BLANKENSHIP



LISTEN TO:
Vodkasodaburg

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:
[Antonette Goroch](#)
[Possessed By Paul James](#)
[The Accidentals](#)
[David C Clements](#)

You'll never hear Birdcloud on country radio. Songs like "Warshin' My Big Ol" (you can fill in the blank on that one) and "Fuck You Cop" just don't have a home on airwaves tuned for "Jesus Take the Wheel." And that's a shame, because the Nashville duo of Jasmin Kaset and Makenzie Green takes country's longstanding love affair with comedy and turns it into something of an orgy, to results that are, sometimes astoundingly, as listenable as they are laughable. The duo trades in trashy tropes and double entendres, sure, but these are two talented musicians who can write a country song with the best of them. So go catch 'em live, because "Saving Myself for Jesus" won't be coming to a station near you any time soon. ★

Brittney McKenna, The Bluegrass Situation

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Sleepers' Reign

Mt. Wolf

MPHO

Platonick Dive



LISTEN TO:
Hide and Seek

Love X Stereo

Seoul, South Korea

From their origins in skate punk, Annie Ko and Toby Hwang rebooted with Love X Stereo. Pulling influences from electro-pop, rock, alternative, and pop; Love X Stereo are the perfect band to dance the night away. Already a veteran of shows in South Korea, United States, Canada, and Southeast Asia, Love X Stereo display how passion and talent can connect with audiences. They're one of the best secrets within South Korea simply waiting to blow up internationally. ★

Chris Park, Korean Indie



LISTEN TO:
Binary

The Spook School

Edinburgh, UK-Scotland

Try to Be Hopeful is the album that every musician wishes they had written. It's infectious at every instant, yet challenging the societal norms facing the world. Still, while there may be a political bent, there's also a school of heavy-handed pop songwriting that can't be ignored, filling your ears with hooks and anthemic choruses. You'll scream at the top of your lungs. If I had kids, this is the record I'd want them to turn them on to, allowing them to

learn something about the world, whilst bouncing about their room screaming and shouting. This is their first trip to Texas, and the group aims to take the world by storm, filling their schedule with shows to spread the gospel of vibrant pop music with meaning across the seas. ★

Nathan Lankford, Austin Town Hall

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

WOMPS Abjects The Gooch Palms Milk Teeth



Lois

Madrid, Spain

Of all the bands to emerge from the Madrid scene these last 18- months, it's ex-Trajano! frontman Lois who is the most intriguing. Channelling C86 in both production and sound, Lois Brea Ares brings the croon back to music with the most arresting vocal delivery since Billy Mackenzie and Nick Cave. It's

very different from the more frenetic garage rock we've heard from the likes of Hinds, Parrots and Los Nastys - more introverted, singular and given to sensitive despite moments of raucousness. ★

Paul Bridgewater, The Line of Best Fit

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

- Go Cozy
- The Blind Suns
- Lucy Dacus
- Slingshot Dakota



LISTEN TO:
Before You



CHRIS DUCE

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Hunny Dinner Blaenavon Them Guns

Spencer Petersen and Thomas Carroll comprise Se-go, a duo who migrated west from their homes in Provo, Utah, and settled in a downtown Los Angeles warehouse dubbed “The Cube.” After two EPs on the French label Kitsuné, Dine Alone Records released their album *Once Was Lost Now Just Hanging Around*, a collection of dance-punk in which Se-go cobbles together guitar scribbles, relentless beats and synths that sound like they’ve gone a few

rounds with a boxer to accompany Petersen’s laconic speak-singing. Petersen sings high and sounds stoned, but that slacker façade belies his subversive lyrical bite. There’s plenty on their debut for fans who think LCD Soundsystem can’t come back soon enough, but Se-go is a rangy beast. Here’s to a healthy case of anything-goes. ★

Kevin Bronson, Buzzbands LA



DAVID WALDMAN

Dilly Dally

Toronto, Canada

Toronto punks Dilly Dally released their visceral debut album *Sore* last year and it was our favorite release 2015. Track “Desire” oozes hints of The Pixies with a distinct growl and sharp guitar-hooks reminiscent of Parquet Courts. Dilly Dally is raw and oozes with passion. Don’t miss out on this Canadian quartet. ★

Nasa Hadizadeh, Alt Citizen



LISTEN TO:
Purple Rage

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Demob Happy

Dead Soft

Warehouse

The Blind Pets



Around this time last year, XYLØ's first song, "America," was proving itself to be a darkly cinematic indie pop hit. Zane Lowe even played the track on a newfangled service named Beats 1. It was instantly evident that this band from Los Angeles was going to create a tremendous stir with their lilting melodies and haunting harmonies. Fast forward to this year, and the brother sister duo have just released a solid debut EP of the same name. The buzz and admiration for XYLØ has not just endured, but it has grown exponentially. On stage, Chase and Paige are commanding, swaying the crowd with their moodily rhapsodic songs. It's no trade secret that XYLØ is on the cusp of mainstream success. ★

XYLØ

Westlake Village, CA

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

- Missio
- Tigers Are Bad For Horses
- Us.
- The Revenge



LISTEN TO:
America

Amy Huang, I Heart Moosiq

Sam Outlaw

Los Angeles, CA



Yes, that's his real name. And yes, it suits him to a t. Which begs the question - was the Los Angeles country songwriter just born with that outlaw spirit, or did that fortunate surname, courtesy of his mother's side of the family, shape him into the artist he is today? Whatever the case, Outlaw is one of the most exciting young voices in country today, blending the Laurel Canyon and Bakersfield influences of his southern California home with old-school Nashville influences. His debut album *Angelesno* - which features a stacked roster of guests that includes the likes of Ry Cooder and Dawes's Taylor Goldsmith - is a breath of fresh air in a bro'd out landscape, and proves Outlaw more than deserving of that telling last name. ★



LISTEN TO:
Ghost Town

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Harvest Thieves
Brett Young
Daniel Romano
Ian Fisher

Alvaro Diaz

San Juan, PR



Probably the hardest working man in today's Puerto Rican hip-hop scene, Álvaro Díaz has become a prime defender of the culture on an island where reggaeton reigns supreme. Díaz possesses limitless charm and a gift for rhyming that shines in his music. Track after track, he's worked at unparalleled speed to steadily increasing acclaim, establishing him in the scene and other Latin American countries like Mexico. Thus far, the crowning moment of his discography is *iLumiLatin Vol. 1*, a collection of some of his most inspired tunes – but don't expect him to take a break from the studio anytime soon. Álvaro returns to SXSW to make a big impact on the fest once again this year, since he was named "Best Latin MC" in 2015. ★

Marcos Hassan, Remezcla



LISTEN TO:
La Champaña

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Kiño

Kif

Audri Nix

El B

Black Fast

St Louis, MO



Building on the strength of the self-released full length *Starving Out The Light* this St. Louis, Missouri based four-piece quickly inked a deal with E1 Entertainment and recorded their latest album *Terms of Surrender* with famed producer Eric Rutan (Morbid Angel, Hate Eternal) at Mana Recording Studios. Be among the first to witness this progressive thrash ensemble as they decimate on-stage at this year's SXSW. ★

Robert Williams, Metal Rules



LISTEN TO:
To Proagate The Void

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Toothgrinder

Monuments

Memories In Broken Glass

The Ansible

WYM

Seoul, South Korea



LISTEN TO:
If I Were Yours

WYM doesn't look like a musician, he looks like a teacher. But once he's behind his keyboard and synthesizers, he takes on another persona. His electronic and synth-pop songs grab your attention and every melody will take you on an audio journey. WYM creates a universe when he's playing and guides you to feel different emotions with each track. ★

Chris Park, Korean Indie

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Oh My Muu

REZZ

April Red

Troller





LISTEN TO:
Bug

Alex G

Philadelphia, PA

Although he just released his first proper studio album *Beach Music* this year via Domino Records, Philadelphia-based musician Alex G is already a trademark name for many. For years the songwriter has released compelling albums on Bandcamp, connecting to listeners on a personal level and cre-

ating a devoted fan base that has led him to where he is now. It's scary to consider that he's only really getting started. ★

Will Oliver, *We All Want Someone To Shout For*

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

Car Seat Headrest Hinds Isaac Gracie Trance Farmers



LISTEN TO:
Falling Short

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE:

- Tesha
- MUNA
- Morly
- SIGNY

Låpsley

Southport, UK-England

From her Liverpool bedroom studio to signing with XL Recordings to the BBC Sound of 2015 longlist to SXSW: Låpsley has come a long way since uploading “Station” to her Soundcloud (now sitting at over a million plays). Her intimate electronics and pitched vocals take on a more fully-fledged form on her debut LP *Long Way Home*, but it magically still feels like you’re reading her diary. ★

Jarri Van der Haegen, Disco Naïveté



Mother Falcon

Austin, TX

At 13 members, Mother Falcon is a force to be reckoned with. However, with music so organic and rich they hit you more like a magic blanket than a bird of prey. The first time I heard of them was en route to a surprise show of theirs at SXSW in 2013. Tucked down under a bridge on the East side of Austin, their acoustic set was lit only by candles and reflected moonlight. Every song was brand new and each one struck me deeper than the last. I can only hope you've never heard of Mother Falcon either as you head to see them this year. ★

Brandon Bogajewicz, The Burning Ear



LISTEN TO:
Quiet Minda

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Ashley Campbell

Cicada Rhythm

Indolore

Hey Marseilles



Viola Beach

Warrington, UK-England

I don't remember how I first heard Viola Beach's "Swings & Waterslides," but I remember how obsessed I instantly became. I've got this wish list of artists I'd want to sign when I finally start a record label, and I immediately added Viola Beach, not knowing anything about the band. The next day, I got in touch with their PR and set up an interview for Pigeons & Planes. It ended up being the first piece that our intern Eric ever did. That interview got me even more excited about the band—they were so down to earth, so genuine in their love of creating and working together. "We just have a good time really, it's not very planned like some bands," lead singer Kris Leonard explained. "Maybe that's a good thing, maybe it's not. But if it turns out that it's a bad thing we can always change it."

When I heard the news of the band's tragic passing, I was devastated. Not because I knew them personally, but because I realized that they'd never have the chance to grow, to evolve, to change, and to realize their full potential. The silver lining in all this, I guess, is that they did it right the first time. They had fun, they did what they loved, and they knew that time was too precious to be spent doing anything but enjoying the moment. ★

Jacob Moore, Pigeons and Planes