

# QUEUE

*Starkville's Best (and only) Music Magazine*

**STING**

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**RHCP**

**BRIAN  
ENO**

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**THE  
SHINS**

**HENDRIX  
ALBUMS  
RANKED**

**THE  
PROPHET'S  
SONG**

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**CROSSROADS  
COFFEE**

**SOUTHERN  
RIVER BAND**

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**JOEY VALENCE  
& BRAE**

# Letter from the Editors

The idea for Queue was born one night when we were hanging out after band practice. We were talking about difficult experiences we had both had with other publications and how we wished there was a paper or magazine dedicated to covering music. We've both loved music since we were kids, pursuing it in any way we can whether that's working in radio or playing in bands even if it means getting \$50 for a 4-hour gig. We were talking about wanting to put our ideas out there when Reagan suggested starting our own publication. What began as a somewhat flippant idea turned into a passion project that is just beginning. We hope that Queue will be a place for musically minded people to share their ideas and put themselves out there. We want to talk about artists that everyone loves while also giving local or smaller artists a platform to get more visibility. We hope that you enjoy reading about what we're passionate about, and if you have a music project you're working on, let us know!

Reagan Bussey

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Reagan Bussey'.

Natalie Staggars

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Natalie Staggars'.



# DISCOGRAPHY DEEP DIVE

**NATALIE**



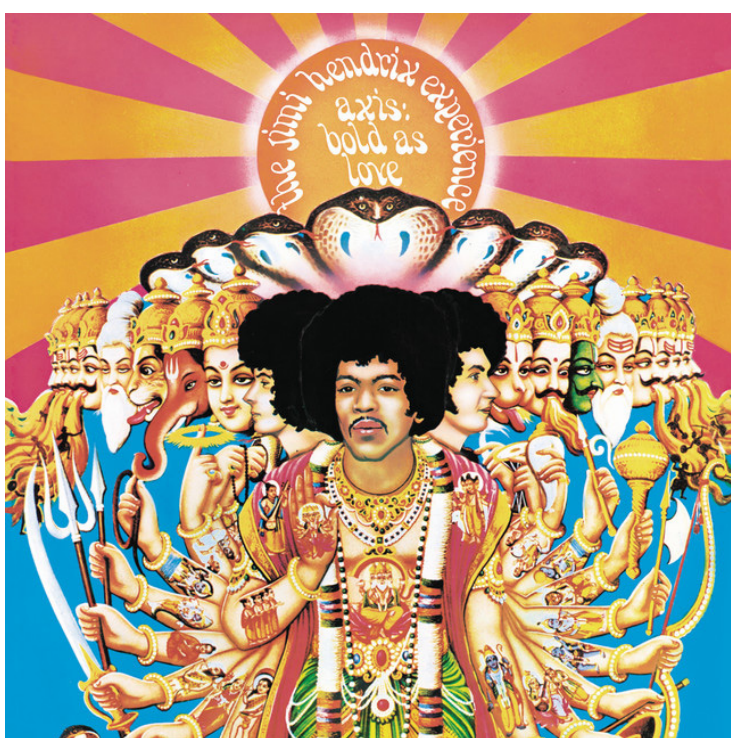
**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
"MANIC DEPRESSION", "FIRE"

**REAGAN**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
"LITTLE WING", "BOLD AS LOVE"

**1**

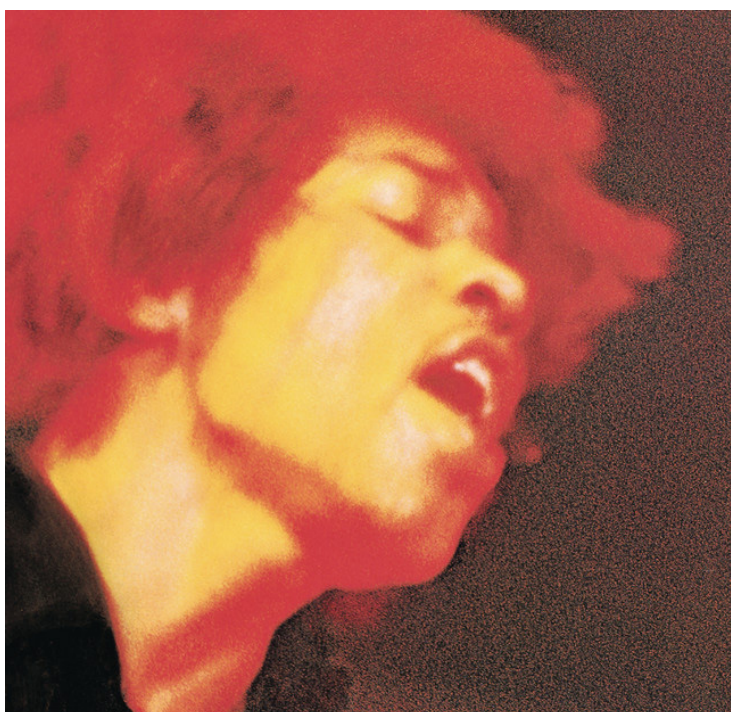


**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
"LITTLE WING", "SPANISH CASTLE MAGIC"

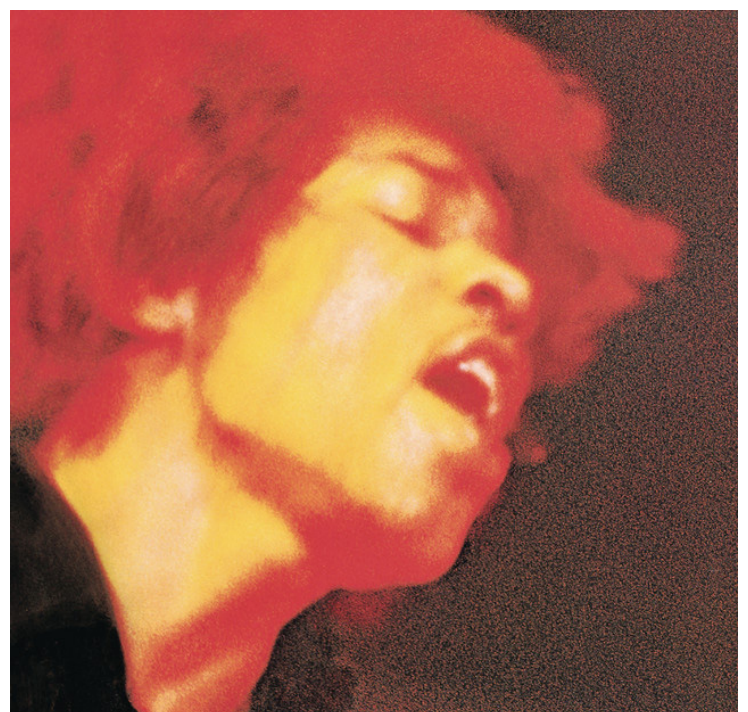


**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
"FIRE", "THE WIND CRIES MARY"

**2**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
"CROSTOWN TRAFFIC", "ALL ALONG THE WATCHTOWER"



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
"VOODOO CHILD (SLIGHT RETURN)",  
"GYPSY EYES"

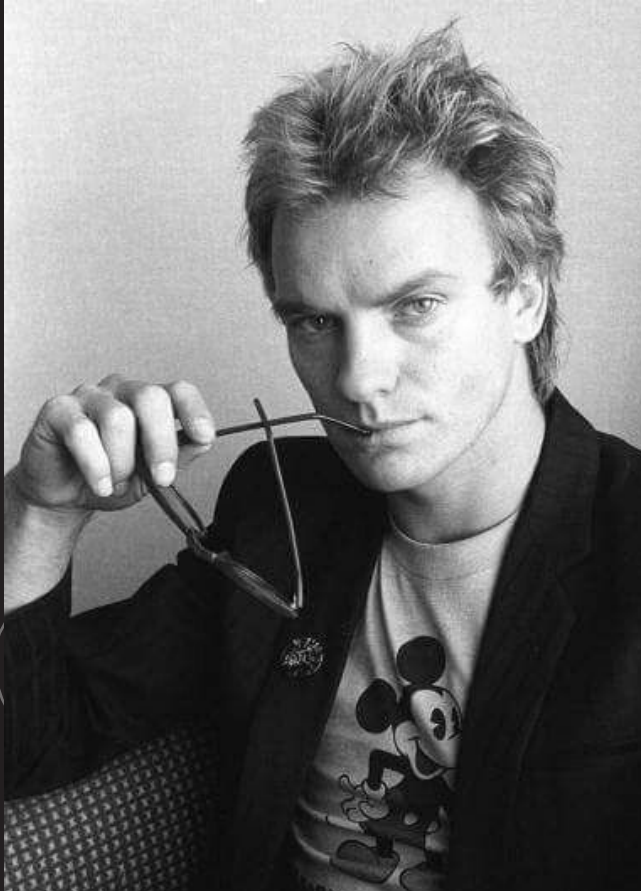
**3**



# Queued Up

## Sting

by Natalie Staggers



I knew who The Police were from a young age, thanks to my dad who took every opportunity to expose me to music he listened to growing up. I liked The Police and listened to their hits throughout most of my adolescence, but I really got into them about a year ago. I decided one day while on a trip to Birmingham to listen through their entire discography because I had nothing better to do. Little did I know, that would be the beginning of an obsessive deep-dive into the lives of Sting, Stewart Copeland, and Andy Summers, and I would spend the following months watching countless videos of live performances and reading interviews with them until three in the morning.

I became obsessed with *Outlandos D'Amour* and *Zenyatta Mondatta* in particular, and they're easily my two favorite Police albums. I started playing bass in December of 2023, and the first couple songs I learned were "King of Pain" and "Roxanne." I tried learning "Man in a Suitcase," but if you've ever listened to that bass line you can probably guess that it's still

a work in progress. Needless to say, once I'd tackled The Police's unfortunately limited discography, the obvious next step was to explore Sting's solo career. I started chronologically with *The Dream of the Blue Turtles* which I enjoyed but was not blown away by. However, the jazzy cover of "Shadows In The Rain" (originally from *Zenyatta Mondatta*) is masterfully done and almost impossible to turn off. Deciding to skip around a bit, I then listened to *Ten Summoner's Tales* and *Mercury Falling*, both beautifully written and produced records.

One night, my dad and I were sitting on the couch and I asked if we could listen to *The Soul Cages* together. I had read Sting's autobiography a few months prior and remembered a passage where he talked about his parents passing away within months of each other. He talked about the complex and difficult relationship he had with his family and how he spent years repressing the emotions surrounding his parents' deaths, unable to process his grief. *The Soul Cages* was his way of moving through those feelings and finding peace with them. We sat in near silence, soaking in the lyrics filled with imagery and music filled with sorrow. *The Soul Cages* is more than just an album, it's an experience.

Though *The Dream of the Blue Turtles* sold more albums than any of the others mentioned, it's probably my least favorite of the ones I've listened to. My personal ranking would be 1. *The Soul Cages* 2. *Mercury Falling* 3. *Ten Summoner's Tales* and 4. *The Dream of the Blue Turtles*. If you want somewhere to start and aren't much of an album listener, my favorite songs are "I'm So Happy I Can't Stop Crying," "La Belle Dame Sans Regret," "Shadows In The Rain," and "Shape of my Heart." Though "La Belle Dame Sans Regret" is entirely in French, the unique sound of the monkey drum and the light, elegant guitar make it a must-listen in my book.

Sting is truly a brilliant lyricist and an amazing musician. He was my main inspiration for learning bass, and I have rarely reached the level of obsession that I did with The Police with other bands. They developed rapidly in the five years that they were releasing albums, and their discography has a wide range of sounds due to that. Sting only progressed more as a musician as he began releasing his solo work where he had full creative control. Sting writes sophisticated music with deep meaning that is utterly relatable, and if you haven't listened extensively to him or The Police, you're missing out.

# This Month

## Red Hot Chili Peppers

by Reagan Bussey

My early childhood memories are mostly music videos, and RHCP's are the ones that stick out the most. In 2006 when *Stadium Arcadium* was released, we preordered the album, and my dad and I watched the premiere of the "Dani California" music video. I was most familiar with their work post-*Blood Sugar Sex Magik*, but over the last month I've been doing a dive into their earlier discography.



I had never listened to their debut album before and I've been vocally critical of the Chili Peppers' early sound in the past, but in the last year or so I've gotten more into funk music. I knew that their early sound was based in funk rock so I thought I would be more open to it with this new mindset, and I was blown away by how good they really were. I applaud the band for being persistent with their funk rock vision considering the type of music that was popular at the time.

Initially, I was disappointed by their debut album, but the demos changed my mind. Unlike the studio versions, the demos showcase their trademark feral energy. Anthony Kiedis has said the same thing regarding their first album.

*Freaky Styley* is my favorite of the pre-Frusciante-Smith lineup. This was the first album to feature founding member Hillel Slovack, who quit before recording the debut album. The album was critically acclaimed but did not reach mainstream audiences like much of their 80's discography. The highlight to me from this album is their cover of Sly and the Family Stone's "If You Want Me to Stay." I can't even listen to the original anymore because the Chili Peppers' version is that damn good.

*The Uplift Mofo Party Plan* is the only album to feature the founding member lineup of Flea, Kiedis, Slovack, and Irons. The recording process was tumultuous. Before getting in the studio, Kiedis was in rehab and continued to use drugs during the recording process which hindered his creative abilities. Slovack's drug use was also worsening but he wasn't as vocal about it as Kiedis was. This was their most successful album to date, commercially and critically. It was also their first album to crack the Billboard Top 200. This album reminds me more of their debut album demos: loud and in your face. I could imagine that having the founding members united for this album contributed to it sounding similar to their early demos.

During the promotional tour of the album, Hillel Slovack died of a drug overdose and Irons quit the band which left Kiedis and Flea with some major decisions to make. After several unsuccessful attempts to fill the guitarist role, they found 18 year old John Frusciante who was an avid fan of the group. The next addition was Detroit born and raised rock drummer, Chad Smith. Initially impressed by his playing ability, they were put off by his hair metal appearance. The members asked Smith to cut his shoulder length hair and when Smith refused, they hired him. With the release of *Mother's Milk* in 1989, RHCP was on track to become one of the most memorable bands to come out of the 1990s, creating music that is still loved to this day.

I used to be a dumb elitist and insisted that the band's first three albums weren't any good. I have a new found respect for the band and all of the members who contributed their own musical elements to each album. I will always recommend *Freaky Styley* to those who aren't too familiar with their early work. It's odd to think of the Red Hot Chili Peppers and not include Frusciante or Smith as part of the line up, but the work of their previous line-ups has something quite special in it.



# Reviews

## Port of Morrow (The Shins)

by Natalie Stagers



*Port of Morrow* was the first album I intentionally listened to in its entirety. When I was nine years old, my dad started showing me music that wasn't just what I heard on the radio. He introduced me to artists like Ryan Adams, Guster, The Shins, Marvelous 3, and many more. I immediately fell in love with The

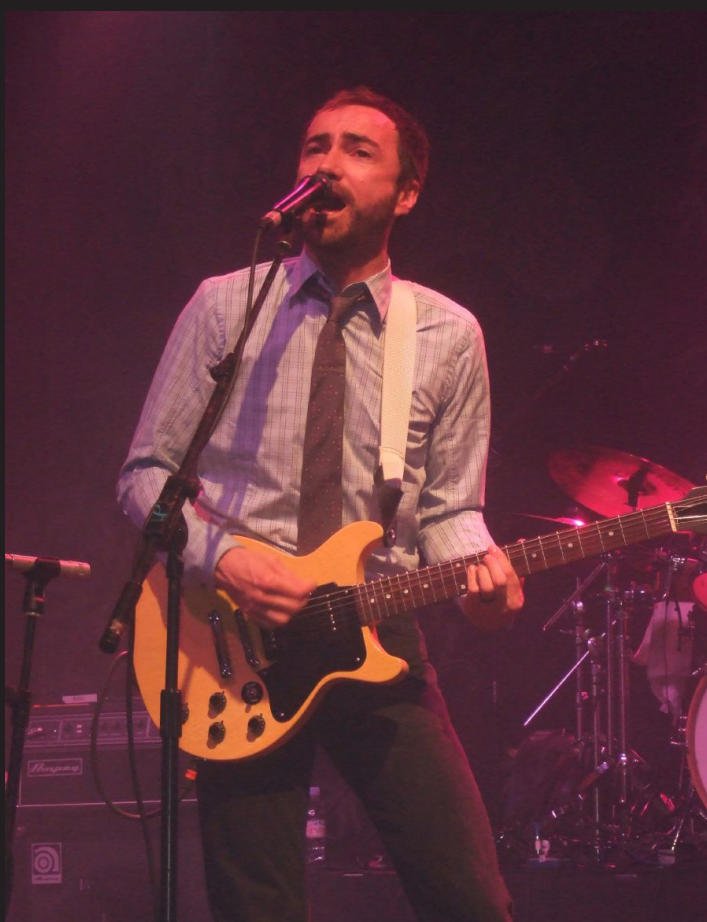
Shins' unique sound because it was so different from anything else I'd heard before. James Mercer's descriptive scene-setting lyrics sung in his English accent captivated me, and I spent (no joke) almost a year listening to nothing but four of their songs on repeat—two of which were from *Port of Morrow*: “It's Only Life” and “Simple Song.”

When I realized that I could actually branch out and listen to more of their discography, *Port of Morrow* was my first choice. This album has no skips in my opinion, and has some absolutely brilliantly written songs on it, namely “Simple Song” and “No Way Down.” Mercer does a great job of hiding impactful lyrics about deep topics under upbeat, poppy melodies. On initial listen, it's easy to get lost in The Shins' music and not even fully understand what the lyrics are saying (because as much as I love James Mercer's voice, sometimes looking up the lyrics is necessary to understand him).

I spent a significant amount of time listening to and enjoying “No Way Down” before I realized the song was talking about economic disparity. The song is written from the perspective of “the son of a government man” and in the first verse, Mercer states, “I was born with blood on my hands and have all the signs of a bleeding heart.” First off, what an impactful lyric to only be a couple of lines into the song. Later on, he begins questioning how the world got to the state it's in, saying, “How'd

we get so far from the sun? Lost in an oscillating phase where a tiny few catch all of the rays?” When have you heard someone just casually use the word oscillating in a song and have it fit so perfectly and naturally? This entire song is masterfully written, and 13 year old me was dead set on getting the lyrics, “Make me a drink strong enough to wash away the dishwasher world they said was lemonade” tattooed. I've since changed my mind a bit on what I want to have on my body for forever, but that lyric will always be one of my favorite song lyrics.

As I said before, this album really has no skips for me, but if I had to pick a few favorites they would be “Simple Song,” “It's Only Life,” and “No Way Down.” The Shins are definitely worth a listen if you've never checked them out, and they're one of those bands that are hard to not get obsessed with if you like their style.





# Here Come the Warm Jets (Eno)

by Reagan Bussey



A jack of all trades, a pioneer in electronic music and a renowned producer, Brian Eno has quite the resume, but I wasn't interested in what he would put on his cover letter. I wanted to start at the beginning and see where he started on his zig-zagging journey of a musical career.

My first experience with Eno was through his work with Roxy Music, albeit unknowingly. In 2015, I went with a friend's family to Gulf Shores for spring break and while we were there, she in-

sisted that we watch the Todd Haynes film *Velvet Goldmine*. This film changed me at a very malleable time in my life. Besides having one of the greatest film soundtracks, the story loosely based on the life of David Bowie was captivating to me.

It exposed me to the music of Lou Reed, the Stooges, T. Rex, Cockney Rebel, and the man himself, Brian Eno. The first track of *Here Come the Warm Jets* was featured in the opening sequence of *Velvet Goldmine*.

Earlier this year, I set a goal that I was going to pick artists that I thought were significant in the grand scheme of music and listen to their discographies. Who better to start with than Brian Eno? As of now, I still haven't listened to his other four subsequent studio albums released before *Ambient 1: Music For Airports* as I'm still processing his debut. I listened to this particular album probably three or four times during my first sitting with it. I haven't heard anything quite like this before. I think Eno took some notes on crooning from his former band's lead singer, Bryan Ferry. The album seems to put you in an emotional tailspin from one song to the next, with stark musical and energetic changes, probably done purposely to keep you on your toes while listening. Eno's odd and seemingly incoher-

ent storytelling and sinister instrumentals (showcased heavily in the B-side track "Dead Finks Don't Talk") coursing through the album kept me hooked with each listen. I have re-read the lyrics to these songs multiple times and still have no clue what he's talking about. Eno has even said that when he writes his songs, the lyrics are secondary and are inspired by the music. Eno does get dangerously close to a Billboard Hot 100-esque song with "Cindy Tells Me."

"Baby's On Fire" is a track that I go back to often and could listen to over and over again. The dark, macabre story told by a sarcastic narrator and a killer solo perfor-

med by King Crimson's Robert Fripp makes it the most memorable from the album. It's easy to see how Eno's career would eventually evolve into ambient "airport" music in just a few short years. When you listen to the backing track on the opening to side B, "On Some Faraway Beach," you see the foundation being laid for the future of his artistic direction.





# NEW ARTISTS

## Southern River Band



by Reagan Bussey

These four Aussies hailing from a suburb of Perth are doing their damndest to prove that rock isn't dead, and they're succeeding. The Southern River Band has made a name for itself in its home country and in the UK. The group is currently on its European tour and shows no signs of slowing down. Lead vocalist and guitarist Cal Kramer possesses the undeniable charisma and sex appeal of peak Justin Hawkins. The group has infectious riffs and are overall a fun band to listen to. Watch out Greta Van Fleet! These cats are coming to take the crown of being the best new rock band.

If You Like Lynyrd Skynyrd, Kiss and The Darkness, you'll like these guys.

Song Recs: 'Vice City' (2018), 'Watch Yourself (You're Gonna Hurt Somebody)' (2024), 'Stan Qualen' (2023)

## Joey Valence & Brae



by Natalie Staggers

If you're like me in that you wish Beastie Boys was still making music, I'm here to put you on to the next best thing. Joey Valence & Brae is a hip-hop duo that puts a modern touch on the unique style of Beastie Boys. Their 2023 album *Punk Tactics* is full of energy and makes me wish I knew how to breakdance. Sometimes I turn it on in the morning while I'm getting ready just to wake myself up. Some people critique them for how similar they sound to Beastie Boys, but I love that style, and I'm just glad that someone is making more music like it. Even if their music is derivative of the Beastie Boys sound, at least it's good. They released *Punk Tactics* at 24 years old which is nothing short of remarkable in my opinion. Just recently, on June 7, they released their second album *No Hands*. While I prefer *Punk Tactics*, *No Hands* is still a fun listen. If you have doubts, what's the harm in listening? Each album clocks in around 30 minutes so worst case scenario you lose an hour of your day. If you like Beastie Boys (and you're not a hater), you'll definitely vibe with Joey Valence & Brae.

Song Recs: "WATCH YO STEP," "STARTAFIGHT," "DANCE NOW," "RN"



# HOROSCOPES



*(March 21 - April 19)*

Don't be afraid to go after what you want this month. You will find yourself faced with many opportunities in the following weeks. Right now it's especially important to be decisive about what you want to invest your time in. Don't get frustrated if something doesn't work out; good things are coming.



*(September 23 - October 22)*

If you've been putting in some extra hours at work, they should be paying off soon, so stuff that resignation letter back in your desk. Your work values you more than they've made it feel like recently and your hard work will be rewarded soon.



*(April 20 - May 20)*

Expect the unexpected this month. Shocking information will be revealed to you and you may find that your sense of security feels less stable than normal. Trust your instincts and try to approach this new knowledge with openness. Be confident in your ability to adapt and handle this change.



*(October 23 - November 22)*

Finish up that artistic project you've been working on. It's going to be well worth it when it's finally done. According to the stars, you're going to be even more of an asshole than normal by the end of the month so focus on solo projects rather than taking it out on those around you.



*(May 21 - June 20)*

You may find yourself feeling less social this month than normal. Communication may sometimes feel forced or as if it doesn't come as easily to you as you're used to, but trust that this is just a season. This is not a great time to seek out new employment or relationships.



*(November 23 - December 22)*

You're likely feeling cooped up around this time. Break out of your routine: take that vacation, book a flight and go where your heart desires. Thankfully, people will actually be interested in what you have to say toward the end of the month so blab as much as your heart desires.



*(June 21 - July 22)*

This is a time of social upheaval. Do your best not to take things personally, and try to find a balance between checking in on loved ones and being overbearing. If you find yourself ruminating, try something new. Get out some creative energy by picking up a new hobby or going to an event you've never been to before.



*(December 23 - January 19)*

The gods of creativity will be calling to you towards the beginning of the month. If you've got a novel or poetry that you've been working on, take the time to finish it up.



*(July 23 - August 22)*

Lean into your senses of honesty and expression this month. You may see those around you struggling to be open with their emotions. Try to meet people halfway. Don't be judgmental if people close to you seem to be more closed off than normal. Give them time to process their emotions, and let them come to you when they're ready.



*(January 20 - February 19)*

Self reflection is important during this time. Think before you speak and try to look at others' perspectives. No need to thank me for saving your ass.



*(August 23 - September 22)*

Don't let your anxiety overrun you this month. It may feel like everyone is against you, but they're just struggling with their own insecurities. Put more effort into relationships you want to foster, but make sure you aren't allowing people to abuse your kindness.



*(February 20 - March 20)*

You'll have a way with words early this month. Wait to finish up your creative works in the middle of the month.





# The Prophet He Said

How Queen's "The Prophet Song" tested the capabilities of technology

by Reagan Bussey



**A** *Night at the Opera*: it was Queen's risk and thank God they took it. *ANATO* has supplied us with some of the most beloved tracks of the 70s. I could write a dissertation on the track listing of this album but we're here to discuss one of the songs that has stuck out to me since I first listened to this album. Sir Brian May composed some of the most underrated tracks in Queen's discography, namely "The Prophet's Song." Coming in at eight minutes and 21 seconds, this is the longest Queen song released during Freddie Mercury's lifetime. The opening track on side two takes you through a journey born from a dream that May had. This song sticks out from the other songs penned by May as his usual go to is relationships and stories about growing up and aging. The lyrics depict a foreshadowing of the biblical story of the great flood. From my understanding, this song was one of the last songs to be completed for the album. Roger Taylor says that May was in a pretty significant time crunch to complete the song as he had to compile all the tape bits to complete his vision. Famed British DJ and close friend of the band Kenny Everett supposedly stole a work tape of the song for the band to play for the press and record label executives and played it on the radio prior to the release of the album.

One thing that has always impressed me about Queen was their use of practical effects. If you look in the liner notes of their albums prior to *The Game*, a little note is depicted insisting that no synths were used during the making of their albums. The beginning of the song has wind noise fading in and out. Producer Roy Thomas Baker said during an interview in the [VH1 "Classic Albums" episode](#) that this sound was created by air conditioner noise that they added a phaser to. A toy koto that May received as a gift while they were in Japan on their previous tour in April of '75 is played as well. At 6:33, a post-production effect is used that you would think is a synthesizer but it's actually the finished tape being sped up from the start of the track to when the next section starts at 6:36. The song is unique in its tuning sequence as well, utilizing drop D (D-A-D-G-B-E). Now I'm not saying that Brian May pioneered drop D but not many songs by '75 were using this tuning, at least in the context of a hard rock song like this.

Let's discuss the technology in this song. Remember, this is 1975. At 3:23, the acapella section of the track starts. Freddie Mercury harmonizes with himself for a minute and 27 seconds before the trademark choir of Mercury, May, and Taylor kicks in. Delay was utilized as well which isn't a first for this band. This effect comes from the classical music technique

of canon where there are multiple musicians who are playing the same line but come in at different times.

The image shows a musical score for the acapella section of "The Prophet's Song". It consists of two systems of four staves each. The first system shows the vocal lines with lyrics: "Ah-Ah Peo ple can you hear me" and "And now I know and now I". The second system continues the lyrics: "Ah - Ah Peo ple can you hear me" and "And now I know and now I know that you can hear me...". The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

In the example to the left, which is showing the first two lines of the acapella section, each entrance is separated by two beats giving the singer ample time to be able to harmonize with his delay. May first experimented with this on their previous album with the opening track "Brighton Rock." The guitar solo is set up in a similar way, with May setting a delay so there is the main guitar and then just one echoed part. "Brighton Rock" and the use of delay during the guitar solo section of concerts became a staple at Queen live performances starting in 1975 all the way up to their last concerts with Freddie. May be-

came fascinated with the idea of expanding the art of delay and using it with vocals. To get the delay effect that they wanted, two Studer tape machines were used and instead of running the tape from one reel to another reel on a single machine, the tape was run from one reel across the control room to the second machine. One bit of nuance that I absolutely love is if you're listening to the acapella section with headphones, the initial sung line is heard in the middle with the subsequent delays bouncing from one ear to the next.

Nowadays, we have digital delay and programs like ProTools where you can copy and paste the line you want delayed and stick it in a separate track. I applaud May, Baker, and Mercury for their patience and determination to get the sound they wanted for a song that wasn't going to get much attention as an album track. Mercury's live performance of the acapella section was improvisational, sometimes including lines from other Queen songs. Unfortunately it was dropped from the setlist by 1978. Even though delay was, and still is, a staple of May's guitar solos during live performances, it wasn't used again in the studio.

The song follows an ABCBA form (better known as "arch form") which is another nod to the classical music elements that are used in the track. Béla Bartók, composer and ethnomusicologist, used arch form in many of his pieces. It's not a typical rock or pop song, as if Queen could ever write a normal cut and dry pop song. In the same "Classic Albums" documentary, May plays through the riff and talks about how the end of each riff is different and never repeats itself.

A = The toy koto and acoustic guitar section

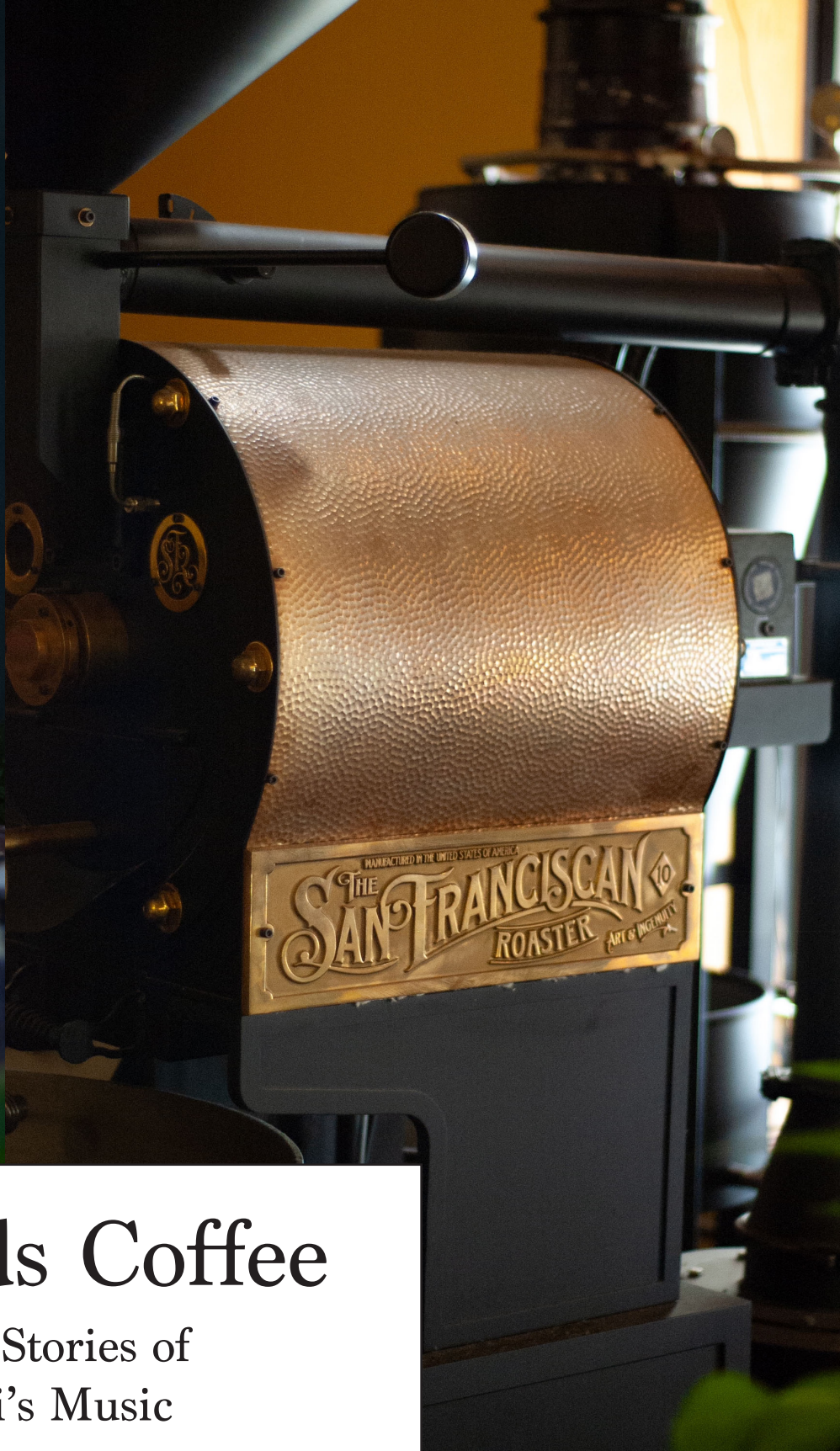
B = "Riff" Section

C = Acapella section

For a song that is based on a biblical story, prophets, and Hell awaiting you, this is a kick ass hard rock song. May never fails with dreaming up memorable riffs and guitar choir solos that make us wonder how he ever thought up something like that. I like to think of this song and "Bohemian Rhapsody" as an A side-B side pairing such as "We Will Rock You/We Are the Champions." It deserved to be the B side of "Bohemian Rhapsody," but Taylor was smart enough to know whatever song was on the flip side was going to make somebody a lot of money.

In an alternate universe, Wayne and Garth are headbanging to the climax of this song.





**Crossroads Coffee**  
Telling the Stories of  
Mississippi's Music  
*by Natalie Staggers*





Dell Smith was pursuing his doctorate in music theory at the University of North Texas when a friend introduced him to Ethiopian coffee and changed the trajectory of his life. Smith had never thought too hard about the quality of the coffee he drank, but when the associate pastor of the church he worked at brewed him a cup of Ethiopian coffee using the inverted AeroPress method, he was blown away.

“I had no idea that coffee could be like that, and it was just such a revelation,” Smith said.

In 2009, Smith’s great aunt opened Lee’s Coffee and Tea, a coffee shop and café in Laurel, Mississippi. When she realized she needed help running the business, Smith’s parents moved from Houston, Texas back to Laurel, and his mom took over managing the store. Smith eventually moved back to Laurel as well and began helping, and a year later his great aunt passed away, leaving the future of the business up in the air.

Over his time working there, Smith realized he loved running the coffee shop and decided to buy the business. He wanted to shift the focus to be less oriented toward food and more about the coffee. He also wanted to incorporate something else that he loved into the business model, music. From this idea, Crossroads Coffee Roasters was born. Smith grew up surrounded by music, with his father playing piano and his mother being a dancer. He has played in multiple bands over the years and majored in music as an undergraduate student.

“I just naturally had an ear for music, probably because I was exposed to so much because my dad was really into music,” Smith said.

Smith’s father owned shoe stores in Laurel, Meridian, Columbus and Tupelo, but Smith never saw himself being a business owner. He watched his father’s small businesses struggle against corporations like Walmart and Payless and didn’t want to subject himself to those same difficulties. However, when his great aunt passed away, taking over the business just felt right. He’d become passionate about making uniquely delicious coffee and wanted to learn how to roast the beans himself.

In 2020, amidst the pandemic, Smith found himself with ample time to dedicate to planning this business remodel and ordered the roaster. It took a year to build and ship due to supply chain issues, but the roaster arrived in March of 2021.

Ryann McGhee, a musician and longtime friend of Smith’s, said she was skeptical when Smith first purchased the roaster but has seen his dedication to the business and is confident he will continue to be successful.

“Dell is laser-focused on giving the best coffee experience that you can possibly have,” McGhee said.

Smith started roasting in the fall of 2021, and Crossroads had its grand opening in December of 2023. Smith buys his coffee beans from Genuine Origin, an importer that provides buyers with information about where their coffee comes from and biographies of the farmers who are cultivating these coffee plants.

“They bring a level of transparency to the process that wasn’t really around 15 or 20 years ago,” Smith said.

Smith started to think about how he would combine his love for music and passion for a good cup of coffee when his design and marketing agent mentioned that he could use his coffee business to support local music. Smith realized that the importance of coffee in musician’s lives often went unnoticed or unappreciated, and he wanted to change that.

“It’s kind of an untapped or unrealized part of what a musician’s life is,” Smith said.

They began brainstorming logos and names and landed on Crossroads. This name was derived both from the crossroads that led Smith to creating this business and the famous story of Robert Johnson who sold his soul to the devil at a crossroads in the Delta to become musically talented. Approximately every three months, Smith chooses a local band for Crossroads to feature. A video documentary is created on the band and uploaded to their website, and blurbs about what sets the band apart and makes them unique are put on the back of every bag of coffee beans.

Crossroads is currently featuring Organized Grime, whose influences include bands like Radiohead, The Beatles and Phish. Smith recently finished producing and editing the video for the next artist they plan to feature: [a singer-songwriter named Tyler Tisdale](#). Tisdale considers Americana and folk to be the easiest way to define his music, but he likes to leave it up to the listener to decide what genre his songs fall into.

“I don’t think any artist wants to put themselves in a box,” Tisdale said.

Tisdale met Smith through playing in a band together almost a decade ago, and they’ve stayed close ever since. Tisdale is eager to collaborate on this project and see where it takes him.

“I’m always excited to work with Dell in any capacity. He’s a great dude, and he’s a visionary,” Tisdale said.

Smith said that he sees the relationship between Crossroads and the artists they feature as mutually beneficial, shining a light on local musicians who may typically get overlooked and giving Crossroads something to advertise to help grow their business as well.

The two main goals Smith has for the future of Crossroads are to grow the business enough that it is self-sufficient and to expand to other locations. He also hopes to develop a personal relationship with the farmers who grow his coffee beans and be able to visit the countries the beans are imported from. In a video on [Crossroads Coffee Roasters’ website](#), Smith said, “I want to be Mississippi’s coffee for musicians. I want them to be supported and uplifted by what I’m doing.”



# Classifieds

Do you have a piece of gear that's collecting dust?

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# Queue & A

## Who is the most overrated band or artist?

Natalie's Pick: Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift has a cult-like following and she's honestly not that good. I don't think her music is horrible, but it's generic and extremely overplayed. Swifties are always like, "Her whole discography isn't just love songs, she writes about really important stuff too!" Sorry that I missed the one song where she wasn't just dissing her ex for clout. She's basically built an entire career off of writing hateful lyrics about men in her past, and most of her fanbase is just as vindictive as she is. Her fans make me want to rip my ears off just so I don't have to listen to them blab about how insightful her lyricism is and how much they hate John Mayer ever again. If you're a Swiftie and this pisses you off, don't bother telling me because frankly I don't care. I've heard the same sob story a million times; my opinion on Taylor Swift isn't changing.

Reagan's Pick: The Doors

"Mr. Mojo Risin" himself just doesn't do it for me, and neither does the rest of the band. I watched an interview with Ray Manzerek (keyboards) recently and the way that he presents The Doors as God's gift to music really rubs me the wrong way. I almost always turn the dial when a song of theirs comes on the radio, even if it means listening to a Top 40 station. Morrison's impact was purely luck. He was an above-average lyricist at a time when there wasn't much sense in lyrics due to the psychedelic movement. The only highlight that I can point out in their discography is the backing musicians on the 1978 release, *An American Prayer*. I just wish they would've muted Morrison's half-assed philosophical ramblings.

Do you agree? Do you disagree?

Who do you think is overrated?

Let us know at [queuezine@gmail.com](mailto:queuezine@gmail.com)

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