

QUELLE

Starkville's Best (and only) Music Magazine

**JIM
CROCE**

**THE HEAD
AND THE
HEART**

**CAROLE
KING**

**RYAN
ADAMS**

**THE POLICE
ALBUMS
RANKED**

**RISE OF
CASSETTES**

**STARKVILLE
DIY**

**THE
LEMON TWIGS**

**GRITS &
GREENS**

STARKVILLE LIVE MUSIC

August 2nd

Jason Blake (*Dave's*)

August 3rd

Battle And The Wheelers (*Rick's*)

Chocolate City (*Dave's*)

August 9th

Stormy Monday (*Dave's*)

August 10th

The Pickup Men (*Rick's*)

Artistik (*Dave's*)

August 15th

Hong Kong Fuck You (*Visual Arts Center*)

Sludgelung (*Visual Arts Center*)

Close Quarters (*Visual Arts Center*)

August 16th

Scott Levi Jones and the Holy Cows (*Dave's*)

August 17th

Frank Foster (*Rick's*)

August 21st

Happy Landing (*Rick's*)

Lemon's (*Rick's*)

August 23rd

Clay Barker (*Two Brother's*)

Make It To May (*Dave's*)

Neutral Snap (*Rick's*)

August 24th

Bicycle Day & Mostly Satire (*Visual Arts Center*)

Snake Mirror (*Visual Arts Center*)

The Band U.S. (*Rick's*)

Highfield (*Dave's*)

August 30th

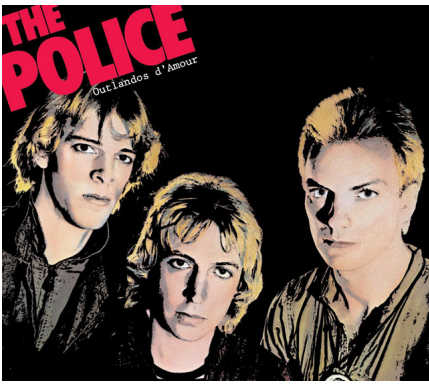
Corey Smith (*Rick's*)

August 31st

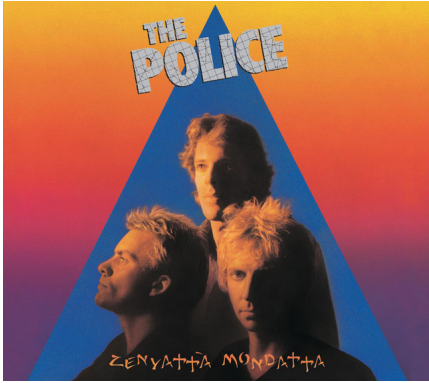
Take 12 (*Rick's*)

DISCOGRAPHY DEEP DIVE

NATALIE



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'ROXANNE,' 'NEXT TO YOU'

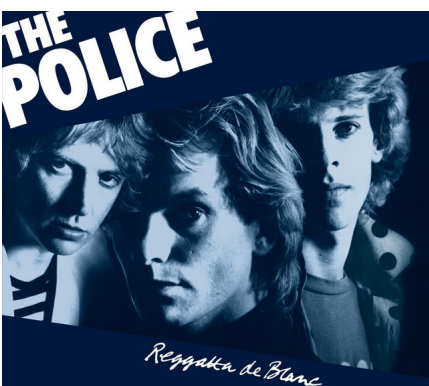


FAVORITE TRACKS:
'CANARY IN A COALMINE,' 'MAN IN A SUITCASE'

THE POLICE SYNCHRONICITY



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'KING OF PAIN,' 'EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE'



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'WALKING ON THE MOON,' 'THE BED'S TOO BIG WITHOUT YOU'



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'EVERY LITTLE THING SHE DOES IS MAGIC,' 'HUNGRY FOR YOU'

REAGAN



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'DRIVEN TO TEARS,' 'MAN IN A SUITCASE'



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'BRING ON THE NIGHT,' 'WALKING ON THE MOON'



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'ROXANNE,' 'NEXT TO YOU'

THE POLICE SYNCHRONICITY



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'MURDER BY NUMBERS,' 'WRAPPED AROUND YOUR FINGER'



FAVORITE TRACKS:
'EVERY LITTLE THING SHE DOES IS MAGIC,' 'HUNGRY FOR YOU'

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2

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Queued Up This Month

The Head and the Heart

by Natalie Stagers



Many people try to group The Head and the Heart with bands like Mumford and Sons and The Lumineers, but frankly I disagree. Where Mumford and Sons and The Lumineers repeat an overused formula to commercialize folk music, The Head and the Heart has a familiar but unique sound. They often get put in the category of folk, but really they're a pop rock band with a heavy emphasis on lyricism. Their music feels welcoming on first listen, but it's not exactly like anything else you've heard before.

The first song that I heard by The Head and the Heart was "All We Ever Knew" off of their 2016 album *Signs of Light*. My dad and I were getting in his truck late one night and he turned the dial to 91.1 WMSV, Mississippi State's radio station. Not long after, my family took a spring break trip

to Sevierville, Tennessee, and we had a cabin deep in the mountains where there wasn't much to do other than walk by the creek or hike through the woods. One day, I was walking around outside and decided to listen to *Signs of Light* in its entirety. I spent the rest of the trip listening to that album on repeat. It was a good album by itself, but combined with the scenery, listening to it felt like a magical experience. I then checked out *Living Mirage*, their 2019 release, which I proceeded to spend hours listening to on my high school best friend's record player. I didn't listen to their debut album until I had already become intimately familiar with their later work, but it's currently my favorite album by them.

The Head and the Heart tells a story of the internal battle that comes with leaving home and trying to figure out who you are on your own. The first track, "Cats and Dogs," represents the beginning of this journey with the lyric, "My roots have grown but I don't know where they are." By the fourth song, "Down in the Valley," you begin to see the turmoil of leaving home, as Jonathan Russell describes hiding away in, "the valley with whiskey rivers" and praying for forgiveness for the rough and rowdy ways that have led him to this point. Later, he states, "I am on my way back to where I started." This song leads right into "Rivers and Roads," likely their most well-known song. This song is riddled with nostalgia and regret, saying, "Been talking 'bout the way things change, and my family lives in a different state." This journey begins to come full circle with "Lost in My Mind" where Russell says, "Mama once told me, 'you're already home where you feel loved,'" and you see an effort to reconcile these familial relationships. The Head and the Heart writes relatable and vulnerable lyrics that are backed by simple but thick instrumentation and harmonies. Their music has a sort of authenticity and openness to it that makes it really moving.

In an interview with *The Seattle Times*, Charity Rose Thielen said, "We want to make good music, and we care about songwriting and we care about creating an experience in our live shows, and that's what matters... for people to be moved in some way by what we do."

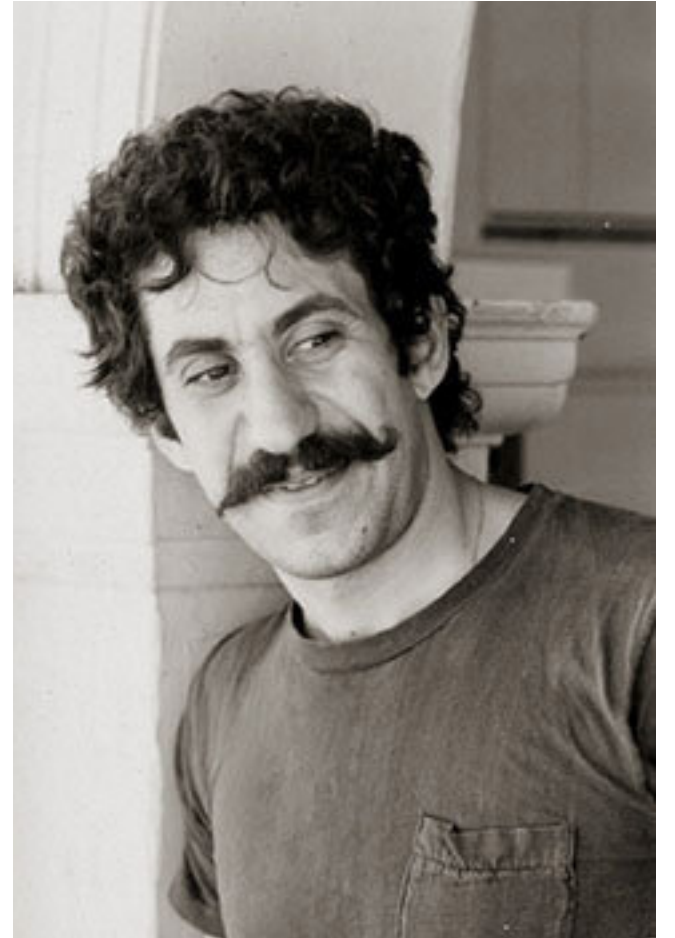
As someone who has seen them live twice, I can confidently say that their live shows are unlike any other concert I've been to. They play mostly small venues that are intimate and make their shows interactive, and the crowd gets really into the music. Their music is personal, relatable, and humanizing, and watching them perform only accentuates that. My top songs by them are "Down in the Valley," "Rivers and Roads," "Lost in My Mind," and "Let's Be Still." Most of these are from their debut album, but there are gems on every album of theirs.

Jim Croce

by Reagan Bussey

Born and raised in Philly, guitarist Jim Croce is a unique one to me. I'm not a huge fan of folk music, but with his golden baritone voice and emotional deliveries, it's hard not to like him. I always heard his songs growing up and remember attempting to learn his tunes on guitar and failing miserably. If it hasn't been evident already, my dad has been a huge influence on the development of my music taste as this is another artist that he introduced to me at a young age. Hearing my dad sing every lyric to "Bad Bad Leroy Brown" is one of my fondest childhood memories. When I learned how to play piano, the only things my dad requested I learn were "Evil Woman" by ELO and the piano intro to "Bad Bad Leroy Brown."

I will admit that I'm a former band kid. My senior year, one of the songs in our marching band show was "Time In a Bottle," and that encouraged me to listen to Croce's greatest hits album on repeat. I fell in love with his music then, but recently my Instagram algorithm has been feeding me videos of his songs so I decided to go back and listen to his discography. I found so many hidden gems that are often overshadowed by his massive hits. There are a lot of them in the three albums released in '72 and '73.



My favorites of his tunes usually follow the lives of ordinary people, but I also appreciate those that look at larger than life characters that are inspired by real people he encountered throughout his various avenues in life before music like his military stint and trucking career. Although his full band studio albums are great, his live performances are really where the magic is. The only performers during concerts were Croce himself and musical collaborator Maury Muehleisen, accompanying on solo acoustic guitar and backing vocals. Croce would tell funny and engaging stories in between songs, usually related to the composition and inspiration behind the next song in the setlist. There isn't a bad song in his catalog, and they'll send you through a variety of emotions. One song will make you laugh and the next one will bring a tear to your eye. Listening to his fifth and final studio album, *I Got a Name*, which was released about two and a half months after his death, will tug on your heartstrings, knowing his fate.

His third studio album, *You Don't Mess Around With Jim*, is my favorite of them all. The opening title track sets the mood for the rest of the album and for what kind of artist he is. "Rapid Roy," a song about a stock car boy who learned how to race by "runnin' shine out of Alabam," stands out the most. It's such an earworm and continues the running theme of memorable characters through his songs.

It blows my mind that Croce only had about a year and a half of great success, cut short by an unfortunate aviation accident. His wife received a letter after his death that depicted that he was growing tired of touring and wanted to retreat from public life to write short stories and movie scripts. In a different world, he would've been able to fulfill his wish of settling down with his wife and young son, but alas we're left with three albums that capsule his legacy as a songwriter and storyteller. Listening to "Time In a Bottle" is eerily foreboding, as if he knew what would happen in just seventeen months.

Song Recs: "Box #10," "These Dreams," "Rapid Roy"

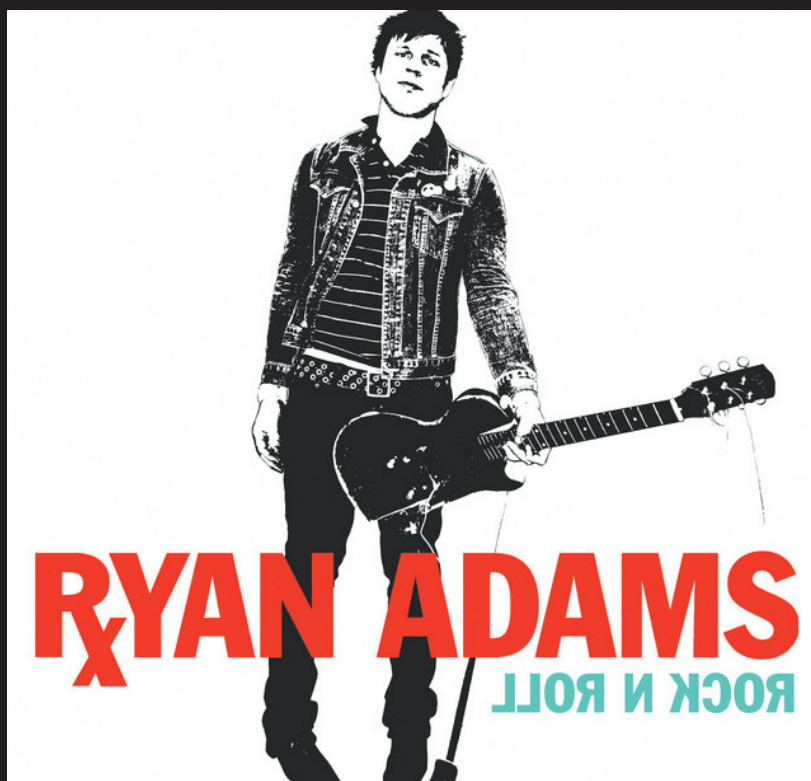
Reviews

Rock N Roll (Ryan Adams)

by Natalie Stagers



I was 12 years old when I first remember hearing a Ryan Adams song. My family was playing darts in the kitchen and my dad had music shuffling on the bluetooth speaker. When “Wish You Were Here” started playing, I irritably asked why we were listening to this appalling disgrace to the art form of music. I couldn’t comprehend why my dad would subject himself to what I perceived at the time as aural punishment. I revisited *Rock n Roll* when I was about 15 and suddenly understood what my dad was hearing. There is something raw and magnetic about this album.



Adams recorded *Rock n Roll* in two weeks as a response to his record label Lost Highway rejecting *Love Is Hell*, an album that was released the next year. The label wanted something more commercially acceptable, and Adams’ solution was to write a 48-minute collection of short, driving hard rock songs. The background vocals on the album are from Green Day’s Billie Joe Armstrong and Smashing Pumpkins’ Melissa Auf der Maur whose sounds only contributed to the aggressive energy of the album. This album received a wide range of reviews, with many critics saying it was cliché and underdeveloped. Critics also argue that the album doesn’t feel cohesive, with constant changes in energy, style, and emotion. Personally, I think that’s kind of the point. He spitefully wrote and recorded the album in two weeks. It wasn’t meant to be some deep, vulnerable, brilliantly thought-out project.

This is not to say that *Rock n Roll* is inferior to Adams’ other work. In fact, it’s my favorite album of his. I think that many critics don’t like this album because it’s not what they would expect from him. As someone whose first experience with his work was *Rock n Roll*, that sound fits his voice perfectly. *The Guardian* critiqued *Rock n Roll*, saying, “Adams is too busy winking, smirking and showing off to convey anything approaching an emotion.” If you can’t hear and basically feel his anger in “This Is It,” I don’t know what to tell you. Also, while we’re on the topic of him winking, smirking and showing off, what even is rock without a healthy amount of pride and ego (and a lot of bottled up anger)?



I think a lot of people disregard this album because it doesn’t sound like Adams’ other work and it didn’t receive great reviews from most critics. It may not be everyone’s cup of tea, but I think it deserves to be a part of the conversation, as it’s stylistically different from everything else he wrote.

When artists release albums that sound too similar, they get critiqued for sounding repetitive and unoriginal, and when they branch out they get critiqued for not “staying true to who they are.” Frankly, I say write what you want to write, and as long as it’s good, who cares if it’s different?

This album won’t be for everyone, and that’s okay. However, if you like somewhat dark but high energy, aggressive rock, you’ll probably love it. My top tracks are “Wish You Were Here,” “Luminol,” “Burning Photographs,” and “Anybody Wanna Take Me Home.”

Tapestry (Carole King)

by Reagan Bussey



I don't think anyone else intertwined themselves into pop music of the 1960s and 70s quite like Carole King. If you're reading this and thinking to yourself, "I don't think I've ever heard a Carole King song," you probably have but just didn't know it.

With her husband Gerry Goffin, King and Goffin proved to be one of the greatest songwriting partnerships in the history of music. Their success inspired two young lads from Liverpool by the names of John Lennon and Paul McCartney who claimed they wanted to be the Goffin-King of England.

From 1961 to 1967, King and Goffin had 33 songs enter the top 40 on the Billboard Hot 100, and four of those went to #1. Several of the more memorable songs from her career made it onto this album, along with originals that she wrote herself or co-wrote with Toni Stern.

Tapestry was released in 1971 and was her second studio album following her divorce and severed professional partnership from Goffin. Her first album flopped commercially but her breakthrough as a solo artist came with this album. It spent 15 weeks straight at #1 and still holds the record for a female artist holding the #1 spot for the most consecutive weeks. She swept at the Grammy Awards, winning four awards for Best Album, Best Female Pop Vocal Performance, Record of the Year, and Song of the Year ("You've Got a Friend").

I wouldn't say I was a Carole King hater before I listened to this album, but I wasn't too keen on her music until I realized what an extraordinary songwriter she was. I started to realize I knew more songs by her than I thought, and I respected her even more.



I didn't expect to absolutely fall in love with this album when I listened to it for the first time. I was familiar with the majority of the album, even if I wasn't familiar with the King versions. I prefer a few of her versions over the original artists that made the songs famous, especially, "Will You Love Me Tomorrow?" It's taken at a slower tempo and the arrangement is simplistic to let the lyrics shine more. The other notable cover included on the album is "(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman," a mega hit for Aretha Franklin. King and Franklin are very different vocalists which makes King's version unique and adds a special charm that you don't find in other versions.

That point goes across her other covers as well. Being able to voice and interpret her songs the way they were intended by the songwriter is what makes this album so special. Her foray into writing new songs such as "So Far Away" and "It's Too Late" (the two strongest original songs on the album) proved to be extremely successful.

I give the album a 4.5/5 because she didn't cover "The Locomotion."



NEW ARTISTS

The Lemon Twigs



4.

by Reagan Bussey

Some people may use the term “Beatles Clone” in a derogatory way, but these two emulate the Fab Four in the best way. The Lemon Twigs are made up of brothers Brian and Michael D’Addario who play all of the instruments, record all the vocals, and oversee the production on their albums. Their catchy lyrics paired with their jazz-inspired and unpredictable chord changes set them apart from other pop music acts today. With numerous appearances on the Tonight Show, Coachella, and Glastonbury under their belt, the D’Addario brothers are starting to make a name for themselves. Their most recent album, *A Dream Is All We Know*, takes the best aspects of power pop and creates a beautifully written and produced album. I’m waiting patiently for the Twigs to break into the mainstream, even though it may take a while.

Song Recs: “I Wanna Prove to You,” “Corner of My Eye,” “A Dream Is All I Know”

Grits & Greens



5.

by Natalie Staggers

Grits & Greens’ first full album was released on May 2 and all 45 minutes are captivating. Ryann McGhee’s vocals are precise and striking, with a rugged quality similar to Grace Potter. They describe themselves as, “rock and roll with a soulful and jam-heavy delivery,” and their influences include The Allman Brothers, Phish and Black Sabbath. With beautiful songs discussing death and tragedy like “Waco,” change and the fear that follows it like “The Fall,” and the complexities of relationships (cleverly looked at through the lens of *The Odyssey*) like “Wind and Sea,” this album has something for everyone. I’ve been listening to it on repeat, and I can’t wait to see what they create next. They are currently touring and will have multiple shows in Mississippi and Alabama this month so make sure to keep up with them by following them on Instagram: @gritsandgreensband.

HOROSCOPES



(March 21 - April 19)

If you find yourself feeling antsy, put that energy into meeting new people. August is a great time to branch out from your social circle, and you may find it easier than normal to foster new connections this month.



(September 23 - October 22)

It may feel like everything sucks right now, but I've got bad news for you. It's not over! You're going to have to endure that for just a few more weeks before things really start getting better. Push through!



(April 20 - May 20)

If you're feeling restless or unappreciated at work, it may be time to seek out new employment. It's time to push past the anxiety of the unknown and prioritize your happiness and mental wellbeing.



(October 23 - November 22)

You may be feeling overlooked. There are going to be more of those frustrations this month but keep looking forward. You may be the right person in the wrong environment. Keep finding those that gel with you so your ideas or opinions are well-received by the right audience.



(May 21 - June 20)

You may be feeling confused or lost spiritually. Now is a good time to talk to people with diverse outlooks on life and seek out new experiences to widen your world view.



(November 23 - December 22)

It should be your chance to shine this month, but your thunder keeps getting stolen from you. August will be filled with a good bit of moments like that as you try to balance professional and personal duties. Don't listen to those who may not have your best interest at heart and keep on keepin' on.



(June 21 - July 22)

You may be struggling with change right now. Things feel uncertain, but trust that the universe has your best interests in mind. Everything will make sense soon.



(December 23 - January 19)

Bad news if you're enjoying a much needed vacation this month: there will be other things out of your control that won't allow you to enjoy that break away from everything. Regardless, you need to be in control of your experiences and if others don't like that, boo freaking hoo.



(July 23 - August 22)

Take time to focus on personal relationships. It may feel like you don't have the time or energy to invest in the people who are important to you, but don't lose sight of what really matters.



(January 20 - February 19)

You might have some unnerving news coming your way this month. Stop lying to yourself and live the way you want to. Control your own life and don't be what others think you should be.



(August 23 - September 22)

Let go of what no longer serves you. It's time to stop worrying about lost relationships and old habits. Put yourself out there by embracing new connections and hobbies.



(February 20 - March 20)

Are you having a hard time compromising this month? That might have a negative impact on your interpersonal relationships. Don't blow your top over small issues. Take the time to look inward and see what the true root of the problem is.

TRAVELING WILBURYS
VOL 1



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ELTON JOHN
GREATEST HITS

MCA
MCAC-1

OVT
41534
Chrysalis

HUEY LEWIS AND THE NEWS
FORE!

CHROME

CF

Cassettes on the Uprise

IIIX

by Reagan Bussey

maxell

ATLANTIC 7
82344-4
DOLBY HX PRO

genesis

WE CAN'T DANCE



PHIL COLLINS
FACE VALUE

CS 16029
DOLBY HX PRO



XDR
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ARCADIA ♦ SO RED THE ROSE



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DAVID BOWIE
WHITE NOISE III K3A7B



MOTLEY CRUE

0829-1
DOLBY HX PRO

Physical media is something that the new generation can not get enough of. With the help of soundtracks featuring music that's mostly 40+ years old such as "Guardians of the Galaxy" and "Stranger Things," all things retro are on the forefront of Gen Z's mind (myself included). Gen Z was growing up at the beginning of the digital music era. I remember listening to some CDs but for the most part, we listened to MP3's either from a player or an SD card that we installed in my parents' vehicles.

Vinyl records have been steadily growing again over the last 18 years after the lowest amount of units shipped in 2006 at 900,000. I think the increase in interest in physical media is partially because Generations Z and Alpha didn't get to experience owning their music. On streaming services, we rent our media, and as we've seen in the past with Neil Young and Joni Mitchell, they could decide to take their music off of your preferred streaming service, leaving you to YouTube or MP3 your favorite songs. Being able to hold your favorite albums and say, "this is mine" has been something the younger generations haven't experienced, so now we're taking charge of that and investing in physical media.

A company called 90s Time Machine that I've seen advertised on my Instagram sells a product where you can buy a "mixtape starter kit" that comes with an old school portable cassette recorder that you plug into your computer. You can transfer your favorite songs from digital to analogue, and it comes with the same awful headphones that came with various listening devices in the 80s and 90s and three blank cassettes.

According to the RIAA, 43.2 million LP's were shipped in 2023 (the most since 1988.) It's hard to truly know how many records people are buying each year because of second-hand purchasing. I would say about 95% of my record collection has been purchased or been given to me second-hand. I believe the same thing is happening with cassettes. In 2021, I walked into a thrift store in my hometown and saw a JVC double-tape deck with speakers and cassette trays. I think I paid about \$15 for the whole setup and my mother was furious that I had brought more junk home with me from the thrift store. She asked me why I would want to buy a cassette player, and I told her that they were going to come back. I've said this to several people over the course of several years, and I think I'm onto something. I went into a record store in Hattiesburg and asked the guy behind the counter if they had any cassettes, and he asked me, "New or used?" I replied, slightly bewildered, "New?"

The second thing that tipped me off was opening my Discogs app one day to see that Olivia Rodrigo was offering her album *Sour* on cassette. That was when I knew that cassettes were making a comeback. A few weeks ago, I sat down and opened a spreadsheet to see if this is just my delusional fantasy of seeing people walking around with Walkmans again or actual reality.

I have a theory that the production of cassettes was a necessity at the time. During the pandemic, Adele's anticipated new studio release *30* caused a major delay in the pressing of other vinyl records. Other artists such as Silk Sonic had to release their album on cassette months before the vinyl version was available. To fulfill the need of owning something physical, consumers instead bought the cassette version of whatever new album their favorite artist released. The majority of my figures come directly from the RIAA, Luminate (formerly MCR data), and 2023 year-end marketplace analysis from Discogs.

The RIAA stopped tracking cassette sales in 2009 but started again in 2023. Luminate has been recording cassette sales since its conception in 2021. Based on the data from both of those websites, cassette sales have gone from 343,000 in 2021 to 500,000 this past year. That's just NEW cassettes. Consulting the Discogs year-end report from 2023 shows that around 260,000 cassettes were sold which gives us a combined estimate of 726,000 cassettes! We'll never know the true number but that gives us a great number to start with. Compared with the data of vinyl records over the last fifteen years, cassettes are not increasing at quite the rapid rate that records have but there's still a steady increase from year to year.

Like I said earlier, I may be delusional in my opinion but the prevalence of evidence is hard to overlook. The way that 80s and 90s culture is taking over the younger generations has them buying these 40+ year old products and integrating them into their everyday lives.



STARKVILLE



DIY

by Natalie Staggers

Starkville DIY began in August of 2022 when Lishman Heathcock, an electrical engineering and computer science student at Mississippi State, realized there weren't many options in Starkville for people trying to pursue independent music.

"Apart from like two concerts that happened in [929 Coffee Bar's] basement before the account started, it was really nothing other than bars or Music Makers," Heathcock said.

Music Maker Productions is a student-led company on Mississippi State's campus that organizes live music events in Starkville. While they aren't opposed to supporting local, independent musicians, they focus more on bringing regional or national acts to Starkville.

Heathcock was doing an internship with Cooperative Energy in Hattiesburg when he was exposed to Hattiesburg DIY, an Instagram account dedicated to giving independent musicians of the area a platform to advertise their shows. This account was based off of DIY Birmingham, an account with over 7,000 followers.

When Heathcock returned to Starkville, he decided to model these accounts and Starkville DIY was born. People gained interest in the account quickly, with the first DIY show bringing around 20 people from Starkville to Columbus. In less than two years, Starkville DIY has grown from an idea that one person had to an account that has nearly 1,500 followers.

The first show was a house show in Columbus on August 19th with bands The Whip Appeal (from New Orleans), Hartle Road, and Gianni Stennis. While passing out flyers at the Midnight Bizarre for this show, Heathcock met Hunter Walt, the guitarist for Bad Data (an indie rock band based in Starkville.) Walt already followed the account and wanted to get involved. The idea for the second DIY show (which happened in September of 2022) began here and included bands Bad Data, Bored to Tears, and Hartle Road. Starkville DIY solely features bands creating original music, as there are already avenues in place for cover bands to book gigs. Most venues are more open to booking cover bands so Starkville DIY's goal is to make it easier for independent musicians to find places to play.

Starkville DIY has grown and there are now multiple organizers, but Heathcock is still heavily involved with booking bands, creating flyers, posting on the account, and recording/photographing gigs. Recently, Heathcock toured with Sludgelung, a hardcore band that regularly plays DIY shows. According to Heathcock, this is the first tour that an original band from Starkville has been on since 2000.



"It was kind of like a watershed moment for the scene to show people that it can happen," Heathcock said.

Heathcock booked the tour after being told two months in advance that Sludgelung wanted to tour in May, and it included shows in Memphis, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Birmingham, and Hattiesburg. Most of these were small house shows, but they were able to secure a spot at The Dragon's Roast, a larger venue in Chattanooga. Though most smaller bands that tour end up losing money due to the cost of travel, food and housing, Sludgelung came out with a profit.

"We ate every day. We didn't really have abysmal sleeping situations. It was actually a huge proof of concept," Heathcock said.

Heathcock attributes the success of the Starkville DIY scene to the humility, open-mindedness and collaboration that most of the local musicians and artists embody. In bigger cities, egos tend to get in the way and people are more focused on their own success than helping the other musicians around them. Starkville is also unique in that diversity is emphasized, with multiple genres being given a platform. Starkville DIY has put on shows with hardcore bands, emo bands, pop bands, acoustic bands and more. They've also done special events like fashion night, poetry readings and live improv art. There will always be at least one Starkville-based band on the bill for every DIY show, but bands from other cities regularly come play, and many have said Starkville is their favorite place to play.

"Come to some of the shows, come to the events. Even if you're doing something by yourself, you can still exist as part of it. It's a collective," Heathcock said, stressing that there was no experience level or size required to play at a DIY show. "I encourage anyone who has projects or stuff they want to do to reach out."

To keep up with Starkville DIY events or contact them with info about a project you're working on, their Instagram is @starkville.diy.

Classifieds

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

Are you in search of bandmates or looking to put yourself out there?

Send us an email at queuezine@gmail.com to get your name and info in the classifieds for the next issue!

Queue & A

What is the perfect song?

Natalie's Pick: "Every Breath You Take"

Kicking off the B-side of their final album *Synchronicity*, "Every Breath You Take" by The Police is the first truly riveting song on the album. Released in 1983, it became the most played song in radio history in 2019 which speaks to its timeless popularity. Hugh Padgham, who also produced for artists like 311 and David Bowie, employs many creative recording techniques on this song, including having Stewart Copeland record the drum track in a dining room to gain the sound he wanted. Sting's masterful control of narrative and lyricism is on full display, inviting the listener to freely interpret the meaning. He effortlessly shifts between themes of a desperate and obsessive lover to political commentary on Big Brother. This song also uses ABACAB, an interesting song form that's rarely used in modern pop music. Lastly, the music video is simplistic, sophisticated, and striking. I don't believe in the idea of "perfection" when it comes to music because art forms are subject to interpretation, but if I had to choose a "perfect" song, it would be "Every Breath You Take."

Reagan's Pick: "Somebody To Love"

When Natalie and I proposed the "Perfect Song" question, I knew my answer immediately and never had a second thought on it. It would have to be "Somebody To Love" by Queen. As soon as I hear the first few seconds, I have to turn it up as loud as I can and sing every word, no matter what setting I'm in. It is beautifully produced, arranged, and performed. When I think about how many times the three singers of the group had to go back and overdub their vocals to achieve that full choir sound, I'm amazed at how dedicated they were to their art. It has become one of Queen's signature songs and a live favorite. If you've never heard the version from their 1981 concert film "Queen Rock Montreal," go listen to it right now. It's hard not to let your eyes get a little misty by the end of the performance. Freddie Mercury's vulnerability will never fail to tug at my heartstrings, especially in the live versions. All four minutes and fifty-four seconds of the song are pure perfection to me. It's a song that I never grow tired of no matter how many times I listen to it. I know "Bohemian Rhapsody" has cemented Mercury's legacy in music history, but to me this one showcases his talents more as a songwriter and singer. Even Freddie Mercury has admitted in the past that this is his favorite Queen song.

Do you agree? Do you disagree?

What song do you think is perfect?

Let us know at queuezine@gmail.com

or DM us on Instagram @queuezine

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5. “Grits & Greens”. Grits & Greens. gritsandgreensband.com.
6. “Sludgelung” by Lishman Heathcock.
7. “Snake Mirror” by Lishman Heathcock.
8. “It’s Only Us” by Lishman Heathcock.