

# QUELLE

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

LED ZEPPELIN  
RANKED

STEELY DAN

PEACH PIT

REQUESTED  
REVIEWS

GUSTER

SCHAEFER  
LLANA  
INTERVIEW

THE RISE AND  
FALL OF MTV

THE  
WARNING  
ART D'ECCO

# STARKVILLE LIVE MUSIC

## January 17th

Colin Stough (*Rick's*)  
Bored To Tears (*House Show*)  
Snake Mirror (*House Show*)  
Red40 (*House Show*)

## January 18th

Jason Miller Band (*Rick's*)

## January 24th

Jax Moore Band (*Rick's*)

## January 25th

Neutral Snap (*Rick's*)

## January 30th

THOU (SAAC)  
Null (SAAC)  
Sludgelung (SAAC)  
Blue Daze (SAAC)

## January 31st

Paxton Peay (*Rick's*)

# Letter from the Editors

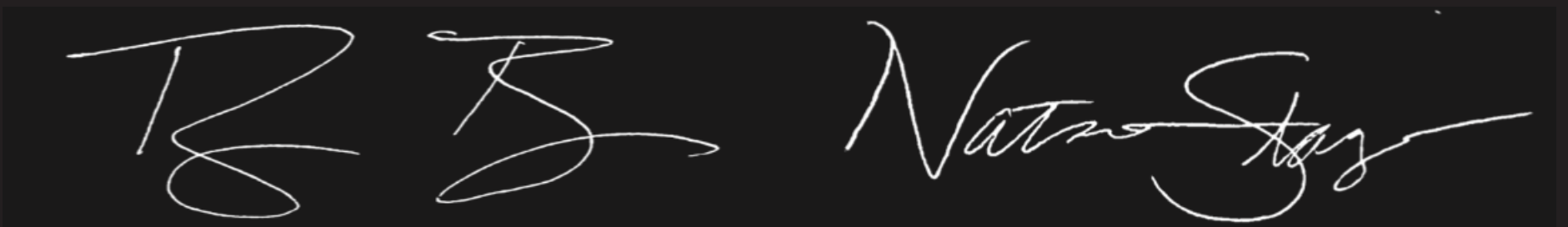
As we go into the new year, we'd like to take a moment to thank everyone who has supported us in starting this publication. Queue began as a small idea that challenged us to get out of our comfort zones and learn something new. As it has grown, we've been overwhelmed by the amount of love, support and advice we've received. Starkville welcomed us with open arms and we would not be where we are today without the help of so many local organizations and businesses.

When we first discussed the idea of starting a magazine, we knew we wanted to create a platform where musicians and people who are passionate about music could come together and share ideas. This would not be possible without each and every one of you. We have met so many amazing people through events, interviews and social media, and we can't wait to see where the future takes us. We have a few surprises in store that we are thrilled to share with you soon, but for now we'll leave you with the newest issue of Queue.

Rock on,

Reagan Bussey

Natalie Stagers

Handwritten signatures of Reagan Bussey and Natalie Stagers in white ink on a dark background. Reagan's signature is on the left, and Natalie's is on the right.

# DISCOGRAPHY DEEP DIVE

**NATALIE**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY,' 'THE OCEAN'



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN,'  
'GOING TO CALIFORNIA'



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'IMMIGRANT SONG,'  
'TANGERINE'



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'HOUSES OF THE HOLY,'  
'TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT'

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**REAGAN**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'I'M GONNA CRAWL,'  
'FOOL IN THE RAIN'



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'THANK YOU,' 'WHAT IS AND  
WHAT SHOULD NEVER BE'



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'THE RAIN SONG,' 'OVER THE  
HILLS AND FAR AWAY'



**FAVORITE TRACKS:**  
'GOOD TIMES, BAD TIMES'  
'HOW MANY MORE TIMES'



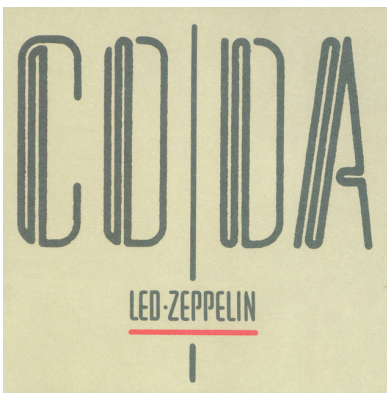
**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'RAMBLE ON,' 'HEARTBREAKER'**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'GOOD TIMES, BAD TIMES,'  
'HOW MANY MORE TIMES'**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'ROYAL ORLEANS,'  
'ACHILLES LAST STAND'**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'WEARING AND TEARING,'  
'POOR TOM'**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'FOOL IN THE RAIN,'  
'ALL MY LOVE'**

**5**

**6**

**7**

**8**

**9**



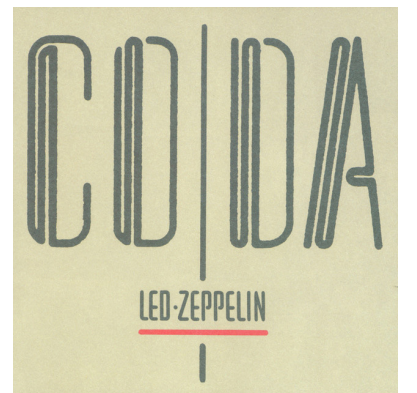
**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'IMMIGRANT SONG,'  
'OUT ON THE TILES'**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'FOUR STICKS,'  
'WHEN THE LEVEE BREAKS'**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT,'  
'HOUSES OF THE HOLY'**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'DARLENE,' 'I CAN'T QUIT  
YOU BABY'**



**FAVORITE TRACKS:  
'HOTS ON FOR NOWHERE,'  
'ROYAL ORLEANS'**

# Queued Up This Month

## Peach Pit

by Natalie Stagers



The members of Peach Pit may not be the most technically skilled musicians you'll run across, but their music is packed full of emotion and imagery, as every indie rock act's discography should be. I first fell in love with them in January of 2022 when I heard "Seventeen" from their debut EP. This is probably the best song that could have introduced me to them because it applied so well to my life at the time. I had just gotten to college and was struggling to find where I fit in and how to be a small fish in a big pond. "Seventeen" perfectly captures the feelings of self-doubt and anxiety that come with big life changes and getting older.

Shortly after, I heard "Tommy's Party" from their most popular album, *Being So Normal*. Both of these songs quickly fell into heavy rotation on my Spotify playlists. I can remember sitting on the floor outside of my freshman dorm bathroom, doing my makeup in the mirror on the bathroom door and listening to these two songs on repeat. It practically became a ritual for me that semester.

About a year later, I had heard a few more songs and decided to listen to the three albums they'd released at the time. I was surprised by how much of their discography I really enjoyed. Every single song isn't jaw-dropping, but they are all pretty solid. Plus, there are enough killer ones to keep you wanting more. To this day, "Tommy's Party" is still one of my favorites, but I also love "Being So Normal," "Live at the Swamp," "Shampoo Bottles" and so many more. I may be a bit biased toward "Live at the Swamp" because it has my name in it, but regardless it's catchy and a fun song to play while driving down backroads with the windows rolled down.

Peach Pit does a great job of changing up the pace of albums by having pseudo bubblegum pop juxtaposed with melancholic longing. Lead singer Neil Smith has a unique voice that reminds me of artists like Tom Petty and Ryan Adams, in that he may not be the best singer technically, but it's hard not to love his voice after a while. Between his voice and the guitarist's tone, it's hard not to recognize Peach Pit once you know who they are. All of their albums are unique, but I was a bit disappointed by their most recent release, *Magpie*.

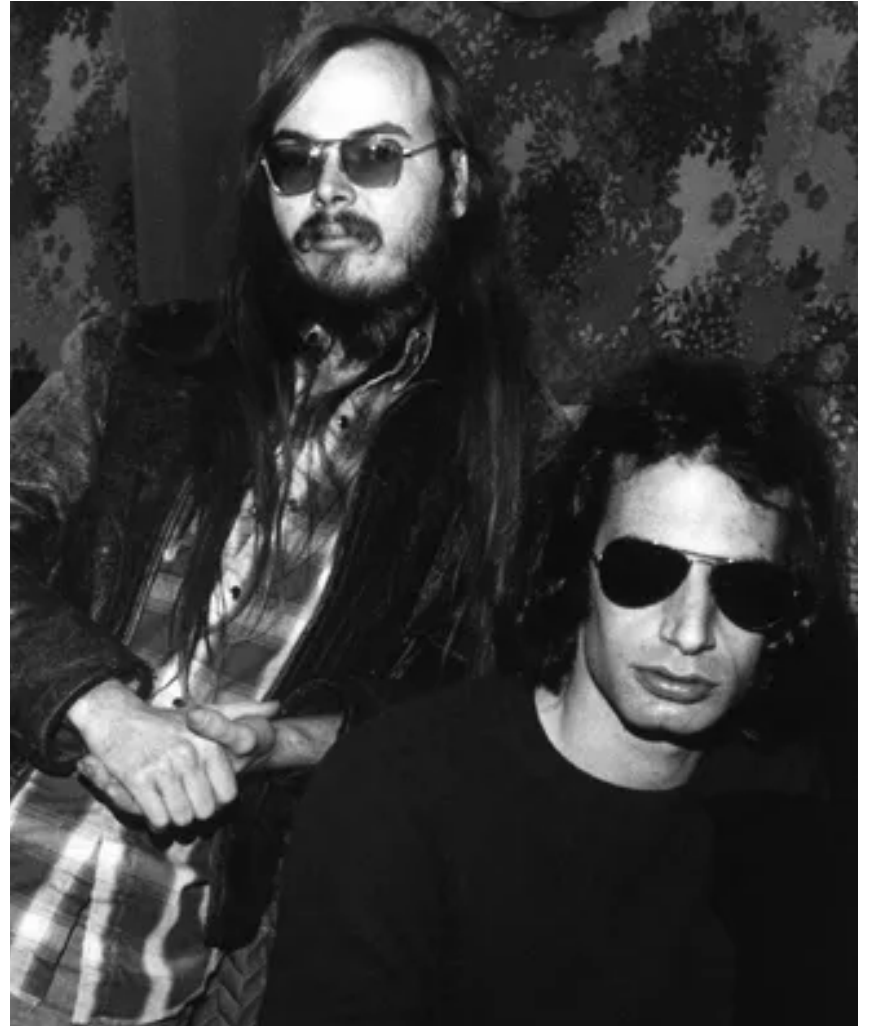
To be fair, *Magpie* had a lot to live up to. In a very short amount of time, Peach Pit went from nobodies to one of the most popular indie rock acts. Forming in 2016, they were signed by a label the same year and were playing at multiple music festivals by 2019. *Being So Normal*, released in 2018, was quickly a staple in the indie rock scene, and *You and Your Friends* and *From 2 to 3* weren't too shabby either. I think I struggle to connect with *Magpie* in the same way that I do their other albums because it feels a bit repetitive and it lacks the soul the other albums have. While it retains their signature sound, there aren't as many standout songs as there are on other albums.

Nonetheless, for anyone who can appreciate simple but meaningful lyrics and the typical unpolished indie rock sound, Peach Pit is a great band to check out. There are songs to appreciate on each album and something about their music is charismatic and easily lovable. A couple other favorites of mine that I didn't mention earlier are "Alrighty Aphrodite" and "Drop the Guillotine" (specifically the version on *Being So Normal*).

# Steely Dan

by Reagan Bussey

I've written about a lot of artists that I love, but it's finally time to do my favorite. Donald Fagen and Walter Becker created some of the most sonically perfect and interesting albums of the '70s. It's hard not to be in the moment when listening to those songs. Even if you just know the hits and their commercially popular songs, each album is like its own work of art, especially the last two albums they released before their twenty-year hiatus. Donald Fagen and Walter Becker initially met as students at Bard College where they began writing songs together. They tried to score their own record deal but had no luck. After being part of the touring band for Jay and the Americans, they finally found a band. Legend has it that they saw an advertisement in *The Village Voice* which read, "Bass and keyboard player required, must have jazz chops. No assholes need apply." This has been disputed over the years, but I still think it's hilarious. Fagen and Becker joined their band, renamed it and became the principal songwriters. The initial incarnation of Steely Dan was then born with Fagen on keyboards and vocals, Becker



on bass, powerhouse duo of Jeff "Skunk" Baxter and Denny Dias on guitar and Jim Hodder on drums. They were relocated to Los Angeles because producer Gary Katz had gotten a job out there and signed Steely Dan to a recording contract.

Their first album, *Can't Buy a Thrill*, was released in 1972 and was very successful, spawning two hit singles: "Reelin' In the Years" and "Do It Again." The pop culture hit "Dirty Work" is also from this album. Their next release, *Countdown To Ecstasy*, did not see the same success as their debut, but the group still appeared on TV to perform their singles. The next few releases did have substantial success but everything changed with their 1977 release, *Aja*. This album is considered one of the greatest sonically produced albums of all time and is a staple of the "yacht rock" genre (but don't say that to Donald Fagen or he'll tell you to go f\*ck yourself). *Aja* was nominated for several Grammy awards, including Album Of the Year, but walked home with Best Engineered Album - Non Classical. *Aja* was the start of the "revolving door" of session musicians for Steely Dan albums. It features jazz and fusion luminaries such as guitarists Larry Carlton and Lee Ritenour; bassist Chuck Rainey; saxophonists Wayne Shorter, Pete Christlieb and Tom Scott; and drummers Steve Gadd, Rick Marotta and Bernard Purdie. The following three years leading up to their next release were a particularly tumultuous time filled with lawsuits, overdoses and Becker being in the hospital for several months. *Gaucha* was released in November of 1980 and it is my favorite Steely Dan album. The songs are seedier, with lyrical content chronicling drug dealers, older men creeping after younger women and a veteran with PTSD. After the events of the last few years, Becker and Fagen were burnt out and decided to disband. Fagen became a recluse in New York after the release of his 1982 solo album, *The Nightfly*, occasionally working on film soundtracks, being a guest musician and writing a few songs for other artists. Becker got clean, moved to Hawaii and became an avocado farmer.

In 1993, Fagen released his first solo album in eleven years which included contributions from his former partner. Thus began a few tours leading up to the first Steely Dan album release in twenty years, *Two Against Nature*. This is a fantastic record and was very deserving of the Album of the Year Grammy, much to the chagrin of Paul Simon, Eminem, Beck, and Arcade Fire fans. The last Steely Dan record to be released was their 2003 release, *Everything Must Go*, another masterpiece by the sarcastic and cryptic duo. There's a famous superstition that began in the 19th century called "the curse of the ninth" in which composers die after completing their ninth symphony. It happened to Beethoven, Mahler, Schubert, and Dvořák. Coincidentally, Steely Dan only released nine studio albums.

# Reviews

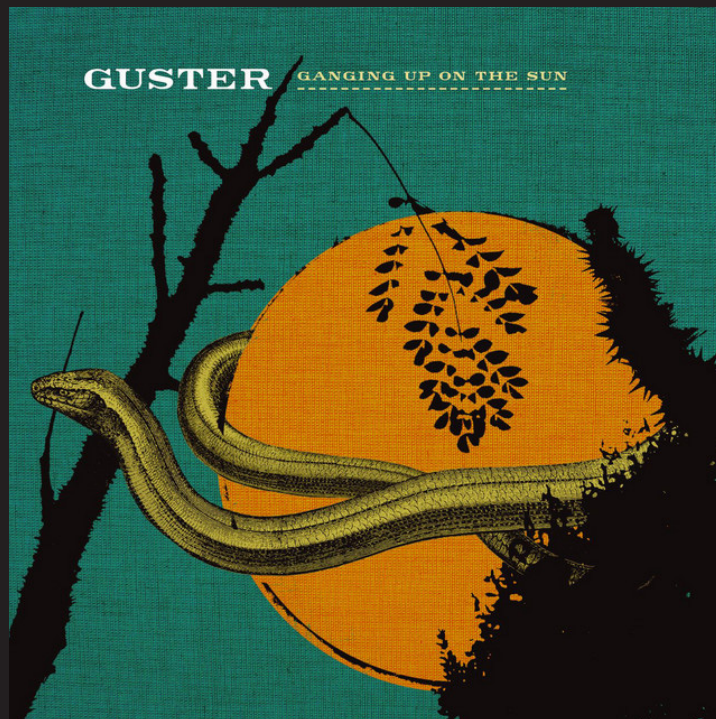
## *Ganging up on the Sun*

Guster

by Natalie Stagers



I was getting in my dad's truck for a late night food run, and when we turned the radio to 91.1, "Satellite" by Guster was playing. He asked me where I wanted to eat, but before he could finish his sentence, I hushed him and turned up the radio. I was hooked before the lyrics even started. The layering of melodies and the unique way the instruments played off each other was enrapturing. By the time we got to the hook of the song, I was completely taken and needed to hear more.



When the song ended, my dad told me that he had first listened to *Ganging up on the Sun* after he received a copy of the CD in his monthly subscription of Paste Magazine. He explained that Paste would mail a print copy of the magazine that included a CD of an underground band they were featuring that month. This conversation, which happened when I was only 11, is what first planted the seed of me wanting to be a music journalist. In my eyes, being able to talk about music and actually share it with others was the coolest thing you could do. Not much has changed.

Not long after, I sat down to listen to the full album and was far from disappointed. Guster has a perfectly unique sound that makes you keep coming back for more. The biggest hits from the album ("Satellite" and "One Man Wrecking Machine") are beautifully written, but there are many hidden gems as well. Two of my favorites are "Ruby Falls" and "Dear Valentine."

"Ruby Falls" begins quietly with only guitar and vocals. Immediately, the unique guitar tone is interesting and before the one-minute mark there is a sudden flood of instrumentation that leaves me spellbound no matter how many times I hear it. The perfectly placed drum fills, thick harmonies, piercing guitar and brilliant use of dynamics make this one of my favorite songs of all time. There is something about this song that makes me feel a sense of tranquility that I don't find very often. The horn solo at the end is just the icing on the cake. Though this song clocks in at just over seven minutes, every single person I've shown it to has loved it.

"Dear Valentine" is remarkable at setting a scene and always plays like a movie in my head. This song's dense harmonies never get old, and I feel like I notice a new aspect to the instrumentation with every listen. With the use of flugelhorn, trombone and trumpet, this song stands out against many other pop/indie rock tunes.

Front to back, this album is fantastic and has something for everyone. Between upbeat, poppy songs like "The Captain" and "C'mon," meditative lullabies like "Lightning Rod" and "Empire State" and indie gems like "Satellite" and "One Man Wrecking Machine," I truly feel like everyone will find at least one song on this album that speaks to them. I grew up with this album, and in a way it feels like a part of who I am. From supporting me through difficult periods of my life to inspiring what is now my dream career, I will always be thankful for Guster and this impeccable collection of songs.



*Music is subjective and we can all agree to disagree.*

*My opinion doesn't determine if an album is bad or not.*

*Five Leaves Left (1969)*  
Nick Drake



A few days ago, I read Nick Drake's entire Wikipedia page and became fundamentally sad by his journey. It's so disappointing that he never experienced the cult following that he developed after his death, but some of the most beautiful art comes out of the pains of life. Who knows if he would've written some of his greatest work had he not experienced some of these things? The sparse arrangement throughout gives me the feeling of isolation, and the very streamlined approach of the vocals goes straight to your soul.

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*Shakedown Street (1978)*  
Grateful Dead



I reviewed *Workingman's Dead* in a previous issue and gave it a fairly unfavorable review but I think this is the Dead at their best. The reggae and disco influence is so obvious on this which is a little more my speed. I knew the title track from a cover that Donald Fagen of Steely Dan did during a concert. The rest of the album was extremely pleasant to listen to as well. I could see myself sitting on the beach with this jamming in the background, listening to the waves crash and seagulls squawk around me.

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*Siamese Dream (1993)*  
Smashing Pumpkins



I understand why people go crazy over this album now. I'm not the biggest fan of grunge or '90s alternative, but I can see why this album is considered one of the greatest albums of the decade. Lead singer and songwriter Billy Corgan put his everything into this album and it's a sonic reflection of that time period that stands out over most alternative albums of the time.

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*Too Low For Zero (1983)*  
Elton John



After a time of minimal commercial success, Sir Elton John was back on top with this one. To put into perspective how big Elton John was during the '70s, he had six consecutive No. 1 albums. SIX!! Funny enough, this album didn't do that well in America but I think with the help of MTV, pop staples such as "I'm Still Standing" and "I Guess That's Why They Call It the Blues" gave him the boost he needed to have continued success throughout the '80s and '90s. In my experience with listening to full Elton John albums, he's very much a "singles" artist and not necessarily an "album" artist. I do love the singles but the rest of the album leaves a lot to be desired.

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*Modern Johnny Sings: Songs in the Age of Vibe (2020)*  
Theo Katzman



I didn't realize that Katzman was a member of Vulfpeck until I did a quick search of him after listening to this album. I wasn't too crazy about the opening track but the second one pulled me in and I was hooked for the rest of the album. It's funny how the songs seem to do 180s from one track to the next, going from a funk-pop song to a country-influenced track. The versatility on the album is my only complaint. I had a hard time focusing throughout when going through a genre whiplash.

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*Bear Market (2023)*  
Mom Jeans.



I don't particularly get anything out of midwest emo and this album did not change my opinion on that. The one positive thing I got out of this album was that I appreciated their choice of chord progressions.

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*Magnolia Electric Co. (2003)*  
Songs: Ohia



My initial reaction to this was, "Oh my god, this dude sounds like Neil Young." I'm a sucker for a slide guitar taking the main stage. Guest singers on this album make it almost play like a musical for me, with each character telling their own story.

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*Submarine (2024)*  
The Marias



Wow. If I was making a list of the best albums of 2024 out of what I've heard so far, this would top it. The sultry, electronic and bass-heavy instrumentation is what makes me fall in love with this album. The ethereal vocals elevate the songs just that much more. "Real Life" is a masterpiece. It gives me the feeling that I'm riding in a convertible with the top down in the middle of the night in a big city. Suffice it to say, I'm obsessed.

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*The New Sound (2024)*  
Geordie Greep



Whenever I listen to anything Black MIDI adjacent, I feel like I'm spinning out in a car and it doesn't stop for 45 minutes. Greep's first solo effort was much more digestible than what I had previously heard from his former band, so much so that it was actually very enjoyable. As the opening track "Blues" started, I thought to myself, "Oh man... Here we go..." but as the second track "Terra" kicked off, my opinion of this album quickly changed. My favorite aspect about this album is that the characters depicted in these songs are arguably terrible people but they seem blissfully unaware of their own horribleness.

# NEW ARTISTS

## Art d'Ecco



by Reagan Bussey

I was doom scrolling through Instagram one night and came across a sponsored advertisement that looked like a clip from a music video. The 1980s look of the video caught my attention and I turned the sound on and was blown away. Who the hell is this person and what song is this? I was then introduced to the interesting history of Canadian musician, Art d'Ecco. He started his career as a glam rock revivalist, wearing a black bob wig and donning heavy makeup. Now he's traded in his wig and eyeshadow for cigarettes and nicely tailored suits. The only way I can describe his current musical incarnation is a combination of Talking Heads and Phoenix. I'd check out "The Traveller" before diving deep into his back catalogue. His new album, *Serene Demon*, will be releasing soon so be looking out for an album review.

## The Warning



by Natalie Stagers

These three sisters from Mexico have been playing together for years and that dedication and hard work is paying off. Not only do they all sing, but they are also all multi-instrumentalists. Their hard rock edge combined with their catchy lyrics makes them so easy to fall in love with. They've performed with multiple big acts, including but not limited to Muse, Foo Fighters and Guns N' Roses. Their first taste of fame came in 2014 when their cover of "Enter Sandman" by Metallica went viral. At the time, the youngest sister was only nine years old! They released their most recent album in June 2024 and it has already received a significant amount of attention. Their natural synergy and ability to blend harmonies vocally is probably partially due to genetics, but nonetheless it makes their music extremely appealing. I'm excited to see where music takes this trio in the future.

# HOROSCOPES



*(March 21 - April 19)*

With your ruling planet Mars in retrograde this month, you want to be tactical about the choices you make. Don't let anger guide your decisions. Be mindful about what and who you invest energy in.



*(September 23 - October 22)*

Oh January... When it's time to start your New Year, New Me plans, something gets in the way. I'm sorry to tell you this but you're really going to have to work hard to get those resolutions crossed off. Don't let it get you down in the coming month.



*(April 20 - May 20)*

You may find yourself being invited to lots of social events this month. Go out, make friends and have fun, but make sure you're not blowing your savings account on temporary experiences.



*(October 23 - November 22)*

Burnout is easing up on you, isn't it? January will start off as a tough month for you but things will look up at the end and you'll be able to enjoy the pleasures of life just a bit easier.



*(May 21 - June 20)*

Expect a promotion or exciting job offer this month! You've been putting in extra work recently, and it's going to pay off soon. Nothing is too good to be true.



*(November 23 - December 22)*

Even though you're on top of the world right now when it comes to feeling like a rockstar, your home is starting to have a stronger pull on you. Don't be afraid to cancel more plans and spend days in the comfort of your own home. You pay rent there so why not spend more time there?



*(June 21 - July 22)*

With an unreasonable amount of expectations and responsibilities on your plate, it's time to decide where your priorities lie. Stop overcommitting and prioritize what needs to get done.



*(December 23 - January 19)*

I know you may have been blindsided by someone's betrayal and you're in the stage of thinking on how to repair it again. Don't think that it's a reflection of that person. Remember that you allowed them to do what they did to you. Do with that information as you will.



*(July 23 - August 22)*

You are a born leader and it's time to lean into that. Lock in and make some progress on the 83 projects you've divided your attention between. However, don't become entirely consumed by your work. Remember to take breaks and make time for yourself.



*(January 20 - February 19)*

Think about moving forward. Don't let other people's actions hold you back in your own personal growth.



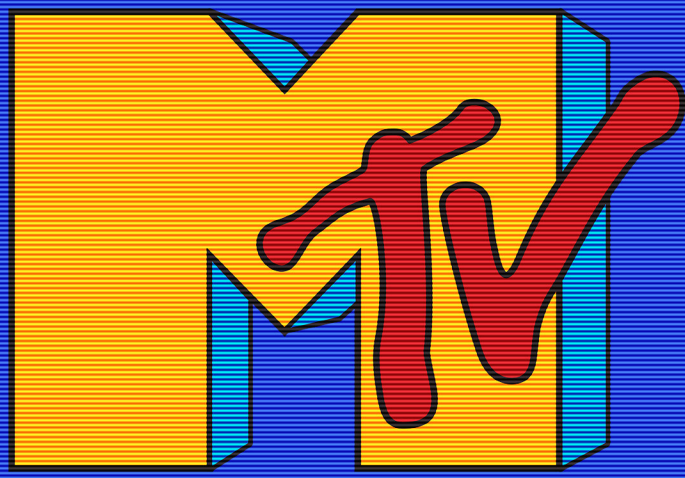
*(August 23 - September 22)*

Your creative mind is on overdrive and you've got tons of new ideas. Don't just write them off. Really sit with your thoughts and see what feels right then put some energy into the ideas that stick around.

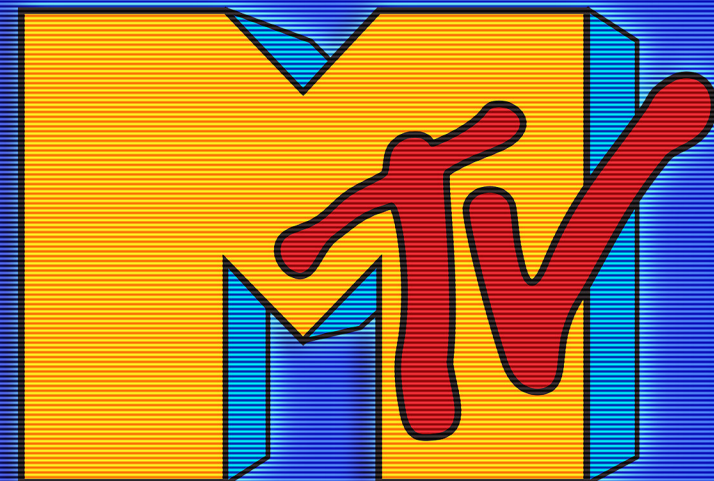


*(February 20 - March 20)*

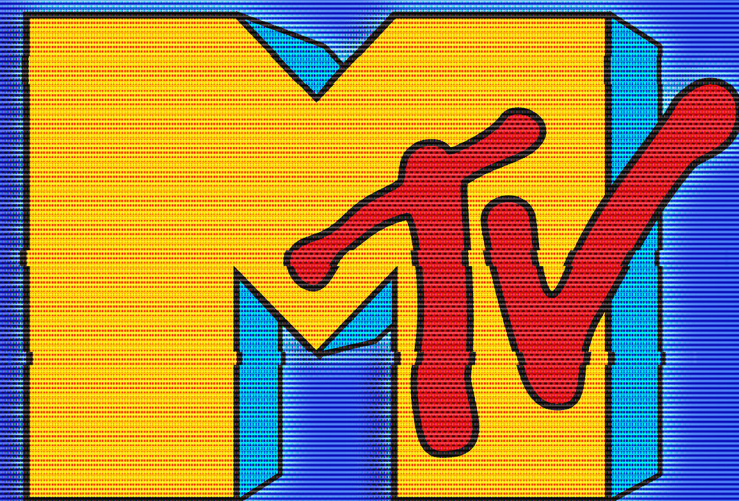
Have you been feeling just kinda bleh? It's time to find the things that bring you happiness again so you can find that zest for your life once more. Don't let life pass you by.



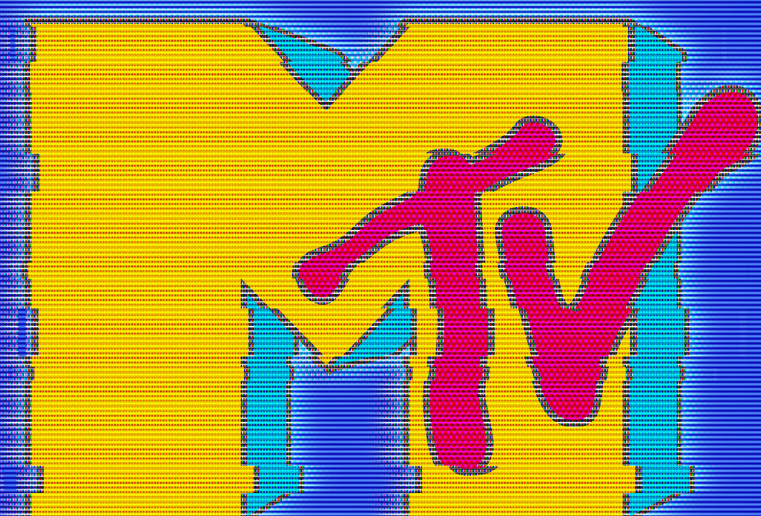
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THE  
RISE  
AND  
FALL  
OF  
MTV

BY  
REAGAN  
BUSSEY

On August 1, 1981, at 12:01 a.m., the way we consume music would change forever. It was the beginning of the first 24 hour video music channel. “Video Killed the Radio Star” by the Buggles (I hope we now see the irony in this over 42 years later) was the first video to be shown on a brand new cable channel dubbed “MTV.”

At the time, the term “music video” meant the band or artist would perform their song in a mock concert setting or they would perform on live television programs such as Top of the Pops, The Old Grey Whistle Test, etc. MTV would also show concerts, and REO Speedwagon was the first band to showcase a concert on MTV.

The channel exposed those who lived in small towns to a different aspect of culture that they wouldn’t hear on their local radio station or see in their Middle America communities. A few MTV executives went to smaller communities where people were watching MTV and asked record store owners what the younger people were buying. One owner replied that the kids were asking for this band called Duran Duran that they had never heard of, and they knew that their vision was working. MTV did, however, receive some criticism in its early days from one of the biggest names at that time. In 1983, David Bowie had just released *Let’s Dance*. He agreed to be interviewed for MTV and criticized the channel for the lack of black artists in rotation. CBS Records caught wind of this and released a nasty statement that if MTV didn’t play more black artists, CBS Records would not allow the channel to play videos distributed by the label. To avoid further backlash, MTV programmers decided to air a music video by an artist who had just released an album titled *Thriller*. The first Michael Jackson music video that aired on MTV was “Billie Jean,” and this launched Michael Jackson to the popularity that we are all more familiar with.

On the other side of the coin, other more established artists were not on board with the whole MTV thing yet. A phenomenon had occurred where if a video was shown on MTV, it was very likely for that artist’s record sales to skyrocket. MTV controlled how the labels and artists were making their money. John Oates of Hall & Oates commented in an interview that he hated the idea of having to make videos to get their music out to the public. Donald Fagen of Steely Dan created a music video for the single “New Frontier,” but Fagen himself was not in the video. When asked about music videos, he replied that they ruin the interpretation that the audience has of the meaning behind the lyrics.

Moving forward to the 1990s, grunge had taken over the world and MTV. The channel began to delve into other internally created programs, the most prominent being “MTV Unplugged.” The program spawned three Grammy Award winning albums, two of those winning the most coveted award, Album of the Year. I like to think of this era as the peak of MTV’s featured programming. They were featuring less music videos but including segments and shows that focused on music news and interviews.

The idea of modern day reality TV was in its infancy when “The Real World” premiered in 1992. There have been 146 canceled reality shows on MTV. Some of them were flash in the pan and only lasted for a season or two but then we look at shows like Jersey Shore, Punk’d, and Pimp My Ride. During this time frame, MTV was showing less and less videos. Justin Timberlake even said during an award acceptance speech at the VMA’s that MTV needs to play more videos. In a 10 year span, time allotted for music videos went from 13.5 to just 8 hours of the 24 hour days. As more reality TV and other non music-centered programming began to ease its way into the channel, less music videos were playing.

By the late 2010’s, MTV had begun prioritizing programs like “Ridiculousness.” In June 2020, “Ridiculousness” aired for 113 hours out of its entire 168-hour lineup. I don’t understand how something so revolutionary has lost sight of why it was created in the first place. What do the creators of MTV think about the state of it? Would they have even created it in the first place or pulled the plug on it the minute that reality TV programming was taking up more airtime than music videos? After watching a video of the first two hours, I couldn’t imagine watching that in 1981 and being so optimistic for the evolution of music then seeing how defaced the program has gotten.



*Schaefer*  
*Lana*  
*Behind*  
*the*  
*Scenes*

by Natalie Stagers

Schaefer Llana has been surrounded by music since she was a child, singing with her mother and grandmother around the house and participating in school and church choir groups. Her earliest memory of singing stretches back to when she was still in a car seat. Her dad was driving and she was singing along with the radio to “We Belong Together” by Mariah Carey when he noted that she could sing really well.

The first song she ever wrote was called “Open Your Eyes,” and it was about waking up to see how beautiful the world is. She wrote this song in third grade because she felt a deep connection to the music she listened to and already knew she wanted to find a way to participate in it.

“I had a whole dance routine for it with my friend Riley that we would perform on the foursquare court on the playground at recess,” Llana said.

At the time, Llana didn’t know any chords on guitar so this song was really just a set of lyrics, but she picked up piano in middle school and got serious about learning guitar in high school so she could accompany her lyrics with melodies. The biggest influences on her music are strong women like Sharon Van Etten, Karen Dalton, Carole King and Hayley Williams. Her lyrics are beautifully vulnerable, touching on emotions that are hard to put a finger on and creating relatable narratives that pull on the heartstrings.

Her first time performing her music in front of a crowd was in 2015 during her freshman year at Delta State University. This experience was exciting but nerve-wracking for her because while she had performed in front of crowds countless times at church and school events, this was her first time debuting her music to an audience of strangers.

“I was at my friend Casey’s house like every day for two weeks practicing because I didn’t want to practice in my dorm,” Llana said.

In 2018, she released her first full album, *49 Ceiling Tiles*, which has many memorable tracks, including but not limited to “Angel,” “Dew,” and “For You.” This album is beautifully poetic, with simple instrumentation, expressive lyrics and creative imagery sprinkled throughout.

In the last decade, she’s played many more shows, playing both her own music and touring with Jimbo Mathus, an American singer-songwriter and guitarist. She tours with two of his bands, one of which plays country and rock n’ roll and the other of which is a jazz band. She bounces between helping behind the scenes and singing backup vocals, but touring keeps her busy no matter what her role is on any given night. As she’s developed as a musician, she’s found that while the excitement of playing to a crowd never goes away, she becomes more assured in herself with every show she plays.

“The curiosity and the exploration of it never really goes away,” Llana said. “I’ve just gotten more comfortable being on stage in front of people.”

Llana said that she uses music as a way to get to know herself better. Writing is a very emotional experience for her and it helps her explore her emotions and find a way to put words to the things she’s feeling. She uses songwriting as a way to channel anger, sadness and happiness in a healthy way, and sometimes she doesn’t really know what a song is about until after it’s written. There are some songs she’s written and looked back on years later to realize they hold an entirely different meaning to her than they did when she wrote them.

One way Llana pushes past anxiety when recording new songs or preparing for a gig is an inside joke with her band where they call each other “donkey brothers.” Her drummer started calling the bandmates donkeys, and eventually it became tradition to “go donkey mode,” as they call it, before a big night or when they feel stuck in the recording process.

“We were recording these new songs and the first song was kind of hard to get into. We couldn’t figure out what was going on, and Ben (my guitarist) was just like, ‘Wait. Has anyone said donkey yet?’ And immediately after, we got the take,” Llana said.

Her band is currently working on an EP that will be the precursor to their second album. Writing and recording can be tedious and time-consuming, as she is often multitasking by touring with other bands, but she values everything that she is a part of. If everything went exactly how she wanted it to, in ten years she’d be touring mainly with her own music, making enough money to make a living but not being so popular that people would notice her in a crowd.

“I work with all these bands and make money doing that so that I can put it into my music and hopefully something can come of that,” Llana said.

# Queue & A Last Month

**What is your favorite  
Christmas song?**

what's your favorite christmas song? 🎄

Break stuff by limp bizkit

what's your favorite christmas song? 🎄

This Christmas -  
Donny Hathaway

what's your favorite christmas song? 🎄

Yule shoot your eye out from  
Fall Out Boy

**Favorite Christmas Song**

Hands down, "Santa Baby"

Be on the lookout for our next Queue & A  
on Instagram @queuezine!



# Queue & A

## What song are you ringing in the New Year with?

Natalie's Pick: "Virtual Insanity" by Jamiroquai

"Virtual Insanity" is one of those songs that I continuously come back to. I may not listen to it for six months, but Spotify will throw it in my rotation every once in a while and all of a sudden I find myself listening to it on repeat. With the rise of AI and all of the fears that surround it, this song only becomes more relatable and applicable to our lives as time goes on. I wonder what the members of Jamiroquai would say about the state of the world we're living in now. Looking past the timeless lyrics, this song is unique instrumentally and it never gets old. I am an absolute sucker for the bassline plus I love anything with horns. Furthermore, the music video is quirky and fun to watch, even when you know how they recorded it. It was extremely impressive for its time and earned 10 nominations and four awards at the 1997 MTV Video Music Awards. I find myself loving this song even more every time I listen to it.

Reagan's Pick: "Pop Muzik" by M

I discovered this song several months ago and have not been able to get it out of my head. I think part of the reason why is that I sort of relate to it. All I think and talk about is "pop music." Whether I'm listening to albums to review them, looking at Billboard charts to talk about them or simply playing some of my favorite songs at the piano, pop music is always on my mind. Popular music encapsulates my life and I feel it will continue to do so as long as I live.

What is your New Year song this year?  
Let us know at [queuezine@gmail.com](mailto:queuezine@gmail.com)  
or DM us on Instagram @queuezine