



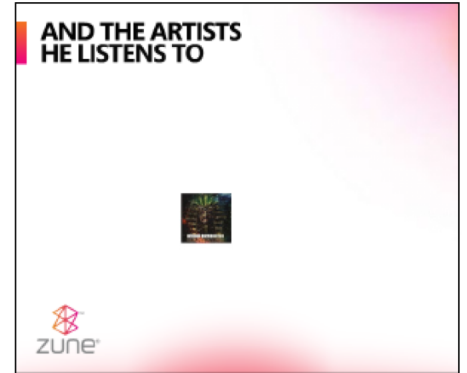
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- Features
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Thu: 12-11-08

Guest List: Best of 2008

Guest List by Pitchfork

the pitchfork 500
 OUR GUIDE TO THE GREATEST SONGS FROM PUNK TO PRESENT

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Lykke Li

Bon Iver: *For Emma, Forever Ago*

This is the album of the year. I can only take one at a time and this is it, the voice, the lyrics, the song. In a way this is the equivalent to the D'Angelo: *Voodoo* album. It will never go out of style 'cause love is all around us and love hurts. His voice kills me.

Håkan Hellström: *För Sent För Edelweiss*

This man is the king back home in Sweden, almost like Elvis Presley. You might have to be Swedish to understand it but its music shot from the hip and heart!

When I come to think about it this is honestly the only records I've listened to that came out this year. Other than that I have to recommend:

Mahalia Jackson Sings Gospel; A Tribe Called Quest: *People's Instinctive Travels & The Paths Of Rhythm*; Nina Simone: *Bad Habits*; Lauryn Hill: *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*; Arthur Russel: *Another Thought*; *Reservoir Dogs* Soundtrack and various mixtapes my friends give me.

Subtle

Mitch Hedberg: *Do You Believe In Gosh?*

Genghis Tron: *Board Up the House*

Pattern Is Movement: *All Together*

The Notwist: *The Devil, You + Me*

Zach Hill: *Astrological Straights*

Rodriguez: *Cold Fact*

Restiform Bodies: *TV Loves You Back*

Dungen: *4*

Portishead: *Third*

Tobacco: *Fucked Up Friends*



Air France

It's always hard to rank things, especially with memories followed by bwingobwango all year 'round. But so far...

Amadou and Mariam: "Sabali"

Jules et Jim: "Pure Shores"

Toumani Diabaté: "Elyne Road"

Taken By Trees: "Sweetness"

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 The Tough Alliance: "Lucky"
 High Places: "Vision's the First..."
 Chanel: "Dance (Fish & Chips Remix)"
 Bandjo: "Black Corner"
 Mark Brown [ft. Sarah Cracknell]: "The Journey Continues"
 Nite Jewel: "Weak 4 Me"
 Andy and Muzz: "Lights When I Close my Eyes"
 Håkan Hellström: "Långa Vägar"
 Memory Cassette: "Asleep at a Party"
 The Radio Dept.: "Freddie and the Trojan Horse"

Gareth, Los Campesinos!

Parenthetical Girls: *Entanglements*
 Grouper: *Dragging a Dead Deer Up a Hill*
 Dananananaykroyd: *Sissy Hits*
 The Organ: *Thieves*
 WHY?: *Alopecia*
 Gang Gang Dance: *Saint Dymphna*
 Abe Vigoda: *Skeleton*
 Xiu Xiu: *Women as Lovers*
 No Kids: *Come Into My House*
 New Bloods: *The Secret Life*



I intended to write words about each of these releases, but it all just sounded stupid. The important things are that *Entanglements* is my favorite album of the year, and also the Ribbon's album is going to be amazing, but it's not released until after I email this in, so I won't include it yet.

Tom, Los Campesinos!

No Age: *Nouns*
 Lackthereof: *Your Anchor*
 Lovvers: *Think EP*
 Sun Kil Moon: *April*
 WHY?: *Alopecia*
 Deerhoof: *Offend Maggie*
 Marnie Stern: *This Is It...*
 The Dodos: *Visiter*
 Neon Neon: *Stainless Style*
 Times New Viking: *Stay Awake EP, Rip It Off*



The Dodos

Group Inerane: *Guitars From Agadez: Music of Niger*

This is technically a reissue, but I think this is the first time available in the U.S. so fuck it. The omnipresent vocal trills might be a little harsh at first, but soon they'll just drift into the background behind a stew of hypnotic guitars and drums. Very

repetitive, very beautiful.

The Dutchess and the Duke: *She's the Dutchess, He's the Duke*

Watching Joe (who plays the vibraphone) listen to this record is like watching a toddler play with a puppy in a field of poppies.

Growing: *All the Way*

These weirdo underdogs rip another album from the gurgling subconscious of the outer limits. While not quite as rad as my personal fave *His Return*, I still find it easy to love these guys' confused yet joyful sounds.

The Ruby Suns: *Sea Lion*

Awesome. Great job.

Thee Oh Sees: *The Master's Bedroom Is Worth Spending A Night In*

Every album by these hometown homies is good and sounds different from the others, but this one rocks the hardest.

Times New Viking: *Rip It Off*
Very good.

TV on the Radio: *Dear Science*

These guys just care. They care about writing good songs, they care about good production and they care about having a good time doing it. "Family Tree" is the jam.



Jamie Stewart, Xiu Xiu

My Top 10 Records From 2008 and Top 10 Records Permeating My 2008:

These are not in any order. It has been a rare pleasure to make this list as, to my great relief, it was not the struggle it frequently can be. That sounds like a rotten thing to say, but it is actually a testament to music being great this year. Each review

will as well be a testament to a flavor(ing) and a living creature.

OF 2008

Prurient: *Cocaine Death* (piss & pit viper)
Larsen: *La Fever Lit* (clove & camel)
Autechre: *Quaristice* (lime & avocet)
Matmos: *Supreme Ballon* (licorice & sperm whale)
HEALTH: *HEALTH* (popsicle & otter)
Diamanda Galás: *Guilty Guilty Guilty* (rose water & maggot)
Crystal Castles: *Crystal Castles* (sumac & hornet)
Windy Weber: *I Hate People* (mold & fluke)
Einstürzende Neubauten: *Alles Wieder Offen* (smoke & leviathan)
Deerhoof: *Offend Maggie* (lady grey tea & deer)

PERMEATING 2008

Cecil Taylor: *Air Above Mountains < Buildings Within >* (lemon grass & swan)
Arvo Pärt: *Moscow Virtuosi* (almond & elk)
Clan of Xymox: *Clan of Xymox* (horehound & snowy egret)
Nico: *The Classic Years* (sugar & oyster)
The Birthday Party: *Hits* (burnt & burnt)
Michael Gira: *Drainland* (apple & anna's hummingbird)
John Cage: *Early Piano Music* (date & fox)
Françoise Hardy: *Ma Jeunesse Fout Le Camp* (vodka & unicorn)
Music of Islam (Celestial Harmonies Series): *Music of Islam, Vol. 15: Muslim Music of Indonesia* (cinnamon & human)
The Chameleons: *Script of the Bridge* (red wine & chameleon)

Ches Smith, Xiu Xiu

Devin Hoff: *Solo Bass*

Devin knows how to mix emotive tonality and atonality very effectively. Also, composition and improvisation. The composed/improvised dynamic of these pieces could be seen to illustrate a political view: a personal discipline which, if everyone developed, might allow us all to live free of coercion.

Frisner Augustin And La Troupe Makandal: *Prepare*

I am not actually sure when this came out, I got into it this year. Frisner Augustin was one of my teacher's teachers. John Amira played with Augustin's group long ago. It is interesting for me what of this is familiar to me, and what is not-- i.e., what Amira retained and passed along, and what alternate solutions he sought. It actually gives me a view into Amira's logic, apart from it being an amazing record in its own right.

Kool Keith: *Tashan Dorrsett*

What the hell is going on here, and who produced these tracks?! This is how music should be constructed.

Evangelista: *Hello, Voyager*

Carla Bozulich is the most passionate advocate of music and people I know. It comes

through on this record. She has a deep understanding of the most important things: Death, love, honesty, friendship. I'm glad she found Tara (Weaponz), Dominic, and co. Also, check out Shahzad Ismaily's drumming.

Marc Ribot: *Exercises in Futility*

Etudes for solo guitar. Some of these pieces work with the tension between opposite poles. In others, familiar references are set in a new context. Many layers of meaning exist simultaneously in each piece, just as throughout Ribot's body of work.

Titus Andronicus

In alphabetical order:

Abe Vigoda: *Skeleton*

Beach House: *Devotion*

Hayes Carll: *Trouble in Mind*

Los Campesinos!: *Hold on Now, Youngster...*

Mount Eerie: *Black Wooden Ceiling Opening*

Ponytail: *Ice Cream Spiritual*

Spanish Bombs: *Spanish Bombs EP*

The Tallest Man on Earth: *Shallow Graves*

Vetiver: *Thing of the Past*

The Walkmen: *You & Me*



NOTE:

None of the above-mentioned albums is actually our favorite of 2008. That album is Spider Bags' *Midnight Moving Skies*. That particular album, however, will not see official release until the spring of 2009, making it ineligible for this list. It really is the best one, though.

Dan Whitford, Cut Copy

Arp: *In Light*

Deerhunter: *Weird Era Cont.*

Lindstrøm: *Where You Go I Go Too*

Hercules and Love Affair: *Hercules and Love Affair*

Thomas Bullock: *Welcome Stranger*

Sébastien Tellier: *Sexuality*

Mercy Arms: *Mercy Arms*

Optimo: *Sleepwalk*

TV on the Radio: *Dear Science*

Fleet Foxes: *Fleet Foxes*



Britt Daniels, Spoon

Crooked Fingers: *Forfeit/Fortune*

The Heavenly States: *Delayer*

Jay Reatard: *Matador Singles '08*

Carbon/Silicon: *The Last Post*

Wolf Parade: *At Mount Zoomer*

Deerhunter: *Microcastle*

Q-Tip: *The Renaissance*

Coin Under Tongue: *Coin Under Tongue*

Earles and Jensen: *Just Farr a Laugh, Vol. 1 & 2: The Greatest Prank Phone Calls Ever!*

The Walkmen: *You & Me*



Dan Bejar, Destroyer

1. Liam Hayes and Plush: "Take a Chance"/"If I Could"
2. Josephine Foster: *This Coming Gladness*
3. The Clientele: *That Night, A Forest Grew* (Jesus owes me 500 Euros, but that's no reason not to plug this record. It's really good, as usual.)
4. Soft Abuse Recordings (I think Chris is

on a real roll, makes me wanna check the mail...)

5. Cat Power: *Jukebox* (The band is really really good, the production super-classy, and I'm really starting to get into her singing, the way she throws her voice around, you know, like Bob Dylan...people say this is too adult contemporary or something, but to me that's just code word for "70s"...don't really like a lot of the songs, but whatever...)

6. Sun Kil Moon: *April*

Haven't heard it, but I generally enjoy this man's work.

7. The Howling Hex: *Earth Junk*

Haven't heard it, but I generally enjoy this man's work.

8. Some Psychedelic Horseshit song I heard, which was really really good, like a lot of their songs can be...

9. Devon Williams: *Carefree*, Paul Weller: *22 Dreams*

These guys have been tying for ninth for years...

10. A bunch of records I've heard in various states of completion comin' out in early 2009, specifically Blackout Beach, Andre Ethier, Pink Mountaintops, Colossal Yes...



John Dieterich, Deerhoof

Caetano Veloso: *Cê*

I'm putting this one first because it actually was released in late 2007, but I didn't hear it until 2008. I was on an airplane, and after skipping through all of these smooth world fusion recordings (what else do you do on a 10-hour flight?), this came on, and I just couldn't believe how raw it was. No

frills here, just amazing songs and Caetano's voice right up close in your ear. "Minhas Lágrimas" has become one of my favorite songs of all time.

Father Murphy: *...And He Told Us to Turn to the Sun*

I played a show at a warehouse near the shipyards in Oakland with Carla Bozulich and Devin Hoff, and the Italian band Father Murphy was one of the other bands that played. They just completely slew. Truly masterfully put together, amazing songs with tons of space and utterly original arrangements. I got the CD that night, expecting it wouldn't measure up (how could it!), and was amazed at how great it was. Just an incredible album.

Mary Halvorson Trio: *Dragon's Head*

I have been a fan of Mary's playing for years and have heard her in many different contexts, but in a way I felt like I was hearing her for the first time on this album. It really feels like her compositional language and improvising are one idea here, they just come from the same place, and it's something to behold. And such a group! I got to see her live with the quartet with Jessica Pavone, Devin Hoff, and Ches Smith (who also plays on this album) in an outdoor show at a park by my house, and it was amazing to see little kids happen by and start dancing in circles to their music.

Singer: *Unhistories*

I found out about this album while in Japan, and I was speaking to someone about my love for US Maple, and he informed me about this new band that some of the members had. There's something about the harmony in this music that I can really relate to. It just makes sense.

Cryptacize: *Dig That Treasure*

I got to see Cryptacize's first show in the same park that I saw Mary and co. play recently. They set up with battery-powered amplifiers and played to a pretty large crowd, and the music was communicated perfectly and clearly even in that difficult environment. There's more space in one of these songs than most bands allow in an entire album, and I think that makes some people uncomfortable. All I can say is that the more you listen to it, the more it makes sense, and the less other music makes sense. I can't wait to hear their new album.

Flying: *Faces of the Night*

We had the great fortune to tour with Flying on this last tour, at least until their van broke down and Fertile Crescent (Sara and Eben from Flying's amazing new duo) finished out the rest of it. I just love these songs and admire the way they put them together. It's very elegant and clear, and they're always stretching in a new direction.

Devin Hoff: *Solo Bass*

Solo bass can be a hard sell for people, but I have to say that this is an incredible record that I recommend very highly. I'm a little biased because I am such a superfan. Still, I know amazing music when I hear it, and it's all here. Such great songs and just a remarkable musical ear. Few musicians can speak through their instruments in the way he can.

Evangelista: *Hello, Voyager*

I only heard this for the first time a few days ago, while driving in the middle of the night from Los Angeles to Oakland, and I was truly blown away. It seemed just right, driving in utter blackness at 3 in the morning in the middle of the desert. Brutal in the best possible way and optimistic, as well.

L'Ocelle Mare: *Porte D'Octobre*

This is the name french guitar virtuoso Thomas Bonvalet (formerly of Cheval de Frise) has given his solo music. I'm a great fan of most everything Thomas has done, but I really was taken aback by this recording. It really sounds to me like a new language being born. He's digging deep into his own creative well, and the result is something truly beautiful and unique.

KIT: Live concert in Tempe, Arizona.

This one's real fresh in my mind as we just finished a tour with them. We pulled up to the club, and there were all these kids running by us, looking very tired, and I assumed it was a high school gym class. Turns out, there was an Army/Navy/Marines recruitment center in the same mini-mall as the club. Hard to believe these children, and I mean children, would be shipped off to Iraq soon. Anyway, KIT set up on the floor this night, and they played what was one of the most mindbending sets I've seen. It was so joyous and scary and totally out of control. Amazing people, amazing music.



Dean Spundt, No Age

1. **Silk Flowers 7"** (self-released)
Awesome new band from New York kinda like Kraftwerk meets the Misfits
"Cough/Cool" single. Very incredible. Going to be on **PPM** early next year.

2. Deerhunter: *Microcastle*

This record blew my mind. We first met Moses and Bradford when Randy and I were in WIVES, we played with Lightning Bolt in Atlanta, and after the show they made us follow them to a bar for an after party. On the way they threw a gallon of water at our car while we were driving. We love these guys. They killed it here!

3. Pocahaunted: *Chains*

Feathery drone town. L.A. awesomeness for just relaxing and closing your eyes and dreaming.

4. Harmony Korine: *The Collected Fanzines*

Just incredible. Mark Gonzales and Harmony made such awesome zine-age and having them all in a book (or in a box set if you are a big spender) is so rad!!!!

5. Harry Pussy: *You'll Never Play This Town Again*

This band kinda changed my life the first time I heard it, I was fully overwhelmed and confused, I love it, and Load rules, too!

6. Abe Vigoda: *Skeleton* and Gun Outfit: *Gun Outfit 7"*

Two things I put out on my label so we will stick them together, tell me if this is too weird, but I love this stuff so much that I put it out! Abe Vigoda are amazing, and this record captures them in a great moment. The Gun Outfit single is incredible, one of my favorite new bands. Okay, no more PPM stuff on the list...

7. Nerves: *One Way Ticket*

Twenty tracks from one of the best bands ever! They are probably most known for writing "Hanging on the Telephone", which Blondie later covered. Do yourself a favor and pick this up now!

8. Eat Skull: *Sick to Death*

This band rules. We got to play with them in Portland and they were so incredible, about to fall apart pop with great amounts of SCUZZ. The best.

9. Mika Miko: *Sub Pop Singles Club 7"*

These two new tracks are so good, Sub Pop scored by getting them on the *Singles Club*, shredding tracks.

10. The Hospitals: *Hairdryer Peace*

I love this band from San Francisco. This LP is so good, new music for new times that will burn your face off!

Randy Randall, No Age

Abe Vigoda: *Skeleton*

Lovvers: *Think EP*

Infinite Body

Soft Circle: *Full Bloom*

King Kahn and the Shrines

Fucked Up: *The Chemistry of Common Life*

Deerhunter: *Microcastle*

Mika Miko: *Sub Pop Singles Club 7"*

Times New Viking: *Stay Awake EP*

High Places: *High Places*

School of Seven Bells

In no particular order:

Earth: *The Bees Made Honey In The Lion's Skull*

Fennesz: *Black Sea*

Erykah Badu: *New Amerykah Part One (4th World War)*

Portishead: *Third*

Madlib: *Beat Konducta Vol. 5+6*

Beach House: *Devotion*

M83: *Saturdays = Youth*

Various Artists: *Ghostly Swim*

Tim and Eric: The "Brownie Mountain" song (We know this isn't an album, but we wish it was.)

Gas: *Nah und Fern*

Robert Wyatt: *Shleep*

**Molly Siegel, Ponytail**

High Places: *High Places*

Soooo good! I can't wait for the club remixes to roll in.

Air Waves: *Lightning EP*

I usually listen to this every day.

Chairlift: *Does You Inspire You*

Beautiful. No more haters.

Lloyd and Michael: *Just as God Made Us*

L.A. female duo. This hits me deep.

Telepathe: *Chrome's On It EP*

Otherworldly.

**Jeremy Hyman, Ponytail (drums)**

Lucky Dragons: *Dream Island Laughing Language*

Lucky Dragons turned rocks into sound. That's crazy!

Marnie Stern: *This Is It and I Am It and You Are It and So Is That and He Is It and She Is It and It Is It and That Is That*

I think I put this on once a week, but only make it through a few songs at a time.

Marnie's music is an arrangement of every idea too crazy for your average bear. I am drawn back to it all the time because of its originality and humility.

Matmos: *Supreme Balloon*

Conceptual techno fetishism meets prog funk. I got a chance to see them live this summer. When they played *Supreme Balloon* I almost cried.

Cex: *Dannibal*

This is my record of the year. There was always something really cool about Steely Dan, and I mean cool as in cold, icy smooth, not a break in consistency anywhere. *Dannibal* is an album that melts that ice and displays the fiery beast that was trapped within.

Ken Seeno, Ponytail (guitar)

1. Earth: *The Bees Made Honey in the Lion's Skull*
2. Animal Collective: *Water Curses* EP
3. Growing: *All The Way*

Dustin Wong, Ponytail (guitar)

High Places: *High Places*

A wonderful record to listen to with headphones, the panning, out of phase constructions are a blissful experience to the ears. Mary's voice compliments the music so well yet blends in like a drop of ink in a glass of milk.

Abe Vigoda: *Skeleton*

The moment that took me over the top with this album is "The Garden". As a guitar fetishist I can't help but drool over the blooming guitars in the climax of this song.

Thank You: *Terrible Two*

The mallets rolling on the toms in "Self With Yourself" emulating a natural low pass like of trance transitions in dance music just makes me want to yell. The keyboards that ride right on top of this driving force are so sinister and before you know it the changes the band makes as a whole is an incredibly pleasurable experience.

Inca Ore & Grouper: *Split*

A beautiful record, sounds that sound like blankets and warm tea. It intrigues me how sonically the song can be warm yet be engulfed by a chill of minor chords.

Indica Ritual, Tour Demo CD

Indica Ritual is a band we played with in the UK, and they totally blew me away with their live performance. I was watching them from the side and the band members were just waving back and forth like a bunch of sails. "Seamless Ejaculation" is a great track.

Beach House

In no particular order:

Tickle Feather: *Tickle Feather*

Adventure: *Adventure*

Lil Wayne: *Tha Carter III*

Abe Vigoda: *Skeleton*

David Byrne & Brian Eno: *Everything That*

Happens Will Happen Today

Ed Schrader: *The Choir Inside*

Fleet Foxes: *Fleet Foxes*

Lexie Mountain Boys: *Sacred Vacation*

Future Islands: *Waves Like Home*

Ponytail: *Ice Cream Spiritual*

Britney Spears: *Circus*



[< Previous](#) | [Next >](#)

[Page 1](#) | [Page 2](#) | [Page 3](#) | [Page 4](#)