



**"WE THRIVE ON CHAOS. IT'S LIKE THE SHOW IS AN EXCITING DISASTER, AND WE'RE JUST THERE."**

Pet sounds: Jemina Pearl, Nathan Vasquez, Jonas Stein and Jamin Orrall (from left) get chaotic in the kitchen.



## HOT LIST

ROLLING STONE EDITORS' FAVORITE ALBUMS, SINGLES AND VIDEOS

### 1 THE KILLERS "When You Were Young"

For the follow-up to their neo-New Wave debut, the Vegas rockers headed in a surprising direction: straight toward Asbury Park. With lyrics like "Burning down the highway skyline on the back of a hurricane" and a "Born to Run"-style riff, all that's missing in this soon-to-be smash is a sax solo.

### 2 DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE "I Will Follow You Into the Dark" video

This Shins-y acoustic single – the latest from *Plans* – is poignant on its own. But wait until you see the video, about a doomed love affair between two bunnies. It might sound sappy, but trust us, you'll be bawling.

### 3 TOM PETTY "Saving Grace"

A "Spirit in the Sky" riff powers this groovy, elegantly produced slab of prime Petty from his new disc, *Highway Companion*. It's his best driving song since "Runnin' Down a Dream."

### 4 BEYONCÉ FEAT. JAY-Z "Deja Vu" video

Déjà vu, indeed. This single repeats the "Crazy in Love" formula: a vintage horn sound plus Beyoncé plus Jay-Z equals a summer smash. A steamy Beyoncé-heavy video doesn't hurt, either.

### 5 THE RAPTURE "Get Myself Into It"

More cowbell! New York dance rockers the Rapture are back with "Get Myself Into It," a horn-and-percussion-propelled party starter from their new disc, *Pieces of the People We Love*. The best part? It's not even one of the tracks produced by Gnarls Barkley mastermind Danger Mouse!

# BE YOUR OWN PET

Sonic Youth's favorite teenage punks break out of Nashville BY ROB SHEFFIELD

**W**HEN BE YOUR OWN PET guitarist Jonas Stein was a little boy, he once visited the office of his dad, a Nashville music manager. "My dad was on the phone with Nikki Sixx," Stein recalls. "So he put me on the phone and we talked music. I told Nikki I was getting into punk, and he told me that was the first stuff he got into. He told me three bands I should check out: the Buzzcocks, the Sex Pistols and the New York Dolls. It all started there."

Today, Stein is the eighteen-year-old guitarist in Tennessee teen punks Be Your Own Pet, looking uncannily like wild-haired skateboard legend Tony Alva in *Dogtown and Z-Boyz*. Onstage, Stein mangles his ax as nineteen-year-old blond firecracker Jemina Pearl flails about and screeches lines like "I'm an independent motherfucker!/I'm here to take your money!/I'm wicked rad and I'm here to steal away your virginity!"

Thank you, Nikki Sixx. Be Your Own Pet are currently turning heads around the world with their raw, unrefined style of hardcore punk. They sound like bored teenagers because they are – Be Your Own Pet just graduated high school, and the core of the band grew up together in Nashville and have known one another since sixth grade. On their killer debut they offer the world two-minute thrash tantrums with titles like "Bunk Trunk Skunk," "Wildcat!" and "Fuuuun." Their live shows are notoriously chaotic – a recent gig at New York's Knitting Factory began with the band members screaming obscenities at each other and ended with most of the underage

#### HEAR IT NOW

Listen to songs by Nashville punks Be Your Own Pet, including "Bunk Trunk Skunk," at [ROLLINGSTONE.COM/BEYOUROWNPET](http://ROLLINGSTONE.COM/BEYOUROWNPET)

crowd storming the stage. "We don't fight that much," Pearl said the next day at lunch. "But we get into it onstage. I always end up getting hit in the face with a guitar or something."

In concert, Pearl comes on as an ass-kicking punk-rock chick, but in person she's disarmingly sweet, a well-mannered Southern girl who says "gosh" while raving about how much she loves Darby Crash and Sid Vicious. Like the other members of Be Your Own Pet, she comes from a musical family. "My dad was a Christian rocker," she says. "He's a photographer now, but he played in all these Eighties New Wave Christian bands with names like Vector." Drummer Jamin Orrall, 18, is the son of Robert Ellis Orrall, a well-known country songwriter and former Boston New Waver; bassist Nathan Vasquez, 17, is the son of a classical-trained guitarist. Says Stein, "We all grew up hanging around tour buses." His father manages clients such as Hank

Williams III and Vince Neil. "Vince, he's been over to the house a few times," Stein says. "My dad was best man at his last wedding."

The members of Be Your Own Pet bonded at all-ages punk shows in Nashville, in the basement of a local hangout, Guido's Pizzeria. "The pizza tasted like cardboard," says Pearl. "But it was a place where kids could play. Now it's an oyster bar or something." Says Stein, "Me and Jamin had a skate-punk band called Hand-rail Homicide. We used to play at Guido's, then go skate in the sewage ditch, break mailboxes, that kind of thing. We'd play for other kids who just wanted to get crazy, and Jemina was one of them. Nashville had an underground thrash hardcore scene then, before it got taken over by all this generic screamo chugga-chugga metal-sounding bullshit."

"We'd go to shows, and I'd always see their band play," says Pearl. "I nagged them, like, 'I [Cont. on 34]

famous build-'em-up-to-tear-'em-down syndrome. But no more. Imperfect *The Libertines* may be. But up against *Waterloo to Anywhere*, its teetering lyricism is precious and vivid. Vocally, Barât is far more authoritative righting Doherty's high, mad quaver than stating his complaints, and he lacks his mate's gift for the compelling chorus. Not a single song on *Waterloo to Anywhere* is as indelibly individual as, to name just three, "Can't Stand Me Now," "Don't Be Shy" or "Music When the Lights Go Out."

It's less what Doherty has to say than how much he hopes to achieve by saying it — ecstasy, liberation, the magic kingdom he calls Albion. By comparison, Barât is just another wasted rock & roller — no junkie, but no teetotaler either. And he can't forget the genius he left behind. Barât insists that not all the breakup songs are about Doherty, and I don't doubt him. The sarcasm in "The Gentry Cove" about the U.K. working class's Iraq options is welcome. Nevertheless, three focus tracks — "Deadwood," "Bang Bang You're Dead," "The Enemy" — sure read like



Dirty Pretty Things: Anthony Rossomando, Barât, Gary Powell, Didz Hammond (from left)

Pete songs. Just as bad, many others read like no-more-Pete songs.

Before we disrespect Barât, though, we should wonder whether we're much better. Is there something voyeuristic, codependent or enabling about the pleasure non-druggies take in the band Pete Doherty made go? The myth that heroin is good for the creative juices can be referred back to the beboppers. Charlie Parker's and Billie Holiday's music survived junk rather than benefited from it, while Miles Davis, John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins

took quantum leaps after they kicked — which hasn't stopped way too many rock & rollers from mounting the same horse. Their reasons vary, but Doherty seems a classic case. Dope is another means to the Albion he hopes to reach via music, and our normal lives are enriched and lightened by his uncommon needs. Barât climaxes the cynical "Gin and Milk" by demanding, "Give me something to try for/Give me something to try for." Probably what he should try for is Albion. Whether he can get there remains to be heard.

# Steady Petty

The most consistent man in rock makes a midtempo gem with producer Jeff Lynne. By Alan Light

**Tom Petty / Highway Companion / American** ★★★½



In a career that has now reached its thirtieth year, Tom Petty has never made a bad album. Some flirt with greatness, others simply deliver the goods (his last release, 2002's *The*

*Last DJ*, was actually one of his weaker efforts, weighed down by its grouchy theme), but the man's consistency is pretty astounding. *Highway Companion* not only keeps his winning streak intact, it even rates above average by these standards.

The album is Petty's third release under his own name, minus the Heartbreakers. Curiously, while his band is among rock's sturdiest units, his previous two solo albums, *Full Moon Fever* and

*Wildflowers*, were arguably the best Tom Petty discs of all. *Highway Companion* doesn't reach the towering heights of those two knockouts, but it shares their combination of stylistic range and rock-solid songcraft.

Tom Petty was always slightly hard to peg. When he first emerged from the Florida swamps, it wasn't clear if he was a classic-rock stoner or an edgy New Waver (on his current tour, the opening acts include the Allman Brothers Band and the Strokes). *Highway Companion* comes out of the gate with this versatility intact — the opening ZZ Top/John Lee Hooker boogie of "Saving Grace," the first single, is followed by the spare, delicate "Square One." His songs are filled with images of motion, travel and the road; the sharpest writing appears in the cryptic, evocative "Down South," describing a journey that includes plans to "see my daddy's mistress," "sell the family headstones" and "pretend I'm Samuel Clemens/Wear seersuckers and white linens."

The biggest surprise is Jeff Lynne's production. For once, the Electric Light Orchestrator (and Petty's one-time bandmate in the Traveling Wilburys) avoids his signature airless walls of sound and keeps things relatively simple and clean. The album runs out of gas a bit toward the end, with a few too many songs in a row stuck in a midtempo Neil Young-ish lope. But for most of the ride, *Highway Companion* is worth the trip.



Petty: Still on a winning streak

## Leonard Cohen



★★★★  
**I'm Your Man**  
Soundtrack  
Verve Forecast

## Anjani



★★★½  
**Blue Alert**  
Sony  
Cohen may not be thrilled to be back, but we're thrilled to have him

IN THE MID-NINETIES, AFTER A twenty-five-year reign as one of the premier songwriters of his generation, Leonard Cohen retired to L.A.'s Mount Baldy to live as a monk. During his absence his reputation grew considerably as a new generation of songwriters began covering his work, even as his retirement savings sunk to nearly nothing while his manager blew his fortune.

Now, forced back into the spotlight at age seventy-two, Cohen is back with two albums of his songs. First up is the soundtrack to the movie *I'm Your Man*, which is mostly drawn from two recent tribute concerts held in Australia. High points include Beth Orton's faithful rendition of "Sisters of Mercy" and Antony's beautiful, quivering take on "If It Be Your Will." It's Rufus and Martha Wainwright, however, who steal the show: Rufus delivers "Chelsea Hotel No. 2" as if he had been the one getting blown by Janis Joplin on the unmade bed, and sister Martha's tender version of "The Traitor" rivals the original. (That said, whoever made the decision to not include their gorgeous duet on "Hallelujah" deserves to be drawn and quartered.) The set wraps up with a new version of "Tower Of Song" that finally features Cohen on vocals, backed by U2 — who make it sound like it was cut for *Zooropa*.

For those craving new Cohen compositions comes *Blue Alert*, by Anjani — the Ladies' Man's longtime collaborator and current girlfriend.

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### KEYTRACKS

The best of this issue's record reviews section

#### Tom Petty "Down South"

On an album that explores the lure of the road, this classic Petty power-pop groover says that maybe you can go home — but it ain't gonna be the same.

#### Silversun Pickups

"Well Thought Out Twinkles" This sunny burst of California guitar rock is gently undermined by obtuse, gloomy lyrics like "Come join in the last hurrah/ With open sores and open jaw."

#### Dirty Pretty Things

"Deadwood" A reminder of everything you loved about the Libertines: sloppy-sharp guitar and a rollicking chorus, courtesy of Pete Doherty's former counterpart Carl Barât.

#### DMX "Come Thru (Move)"

The return of DMX means that the clubs are once again utterly unsafe, as fellow musclehead Busta Rhymes pops in for this clenched-jaw banger.

#### Muse "Supermassive Black Hole"

These overblown sub-Radiohead doomsters go all-out electro on this rocking single, with surprisingly sexy, catchy results.

#### Corinne Bailey Rae

"Put Your Records On" Sweet summertime single from English chanteuse, with bubbly coos, gentle funk and a chorus that recalls prime Stevie Wonder.

Cohen wrote and produced all the tracks, but Anjani (whose sultry, soaring voice is the polar opposite of Cohen's rasp) handles the vocals. The sparse piano arrangements allow Cohen's words to stay in the spotlight. With lines like "I want you more and more/I taught the Kama Sutra/But I never loved before," it's clear Cohen's legendary libido is still intact. Cohen's return may be largely due to financial necessity, but that doesn't mean he's resting on his laurels. **ANDY GREENE**

### BUY THESE NOW



**Johnny Cash**  
**American V: A Hundred Highways**  
Lost Highway/American  
The first posthumous album in the Rick Rubin-produced *American* series feels like a deathbed benediction.



**Rhymefest**  
**Blue Collar**  
J  
The guy who co-wrote "Jesus Walks" shows workingman's muscle on his debut, with help from Kanye and the late Ol' Dirty Bastard.



**Thom Yorke**  
**The Eraser**  
XL  
The Radiohead singer erases the rest of his band for one album and goes deep into the well of synth-pop loneliness.