

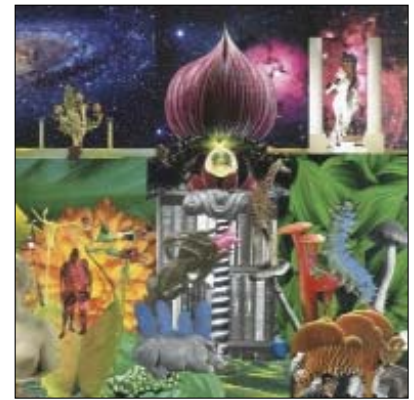
**DAVE ALVIN**  
**WEST OF THE WEST**  
YEP ROC

One of the finest composers of rootsy Americana since his years with the Blasters, **Dave Alvin** celebrates the quintessential songs (and songwriters) of his native California on **West of the West**. As revelatory as the songs he selects is what **Alvin** does with them, turning Jackson Browne's "Redneck Friend" into a shuffle worthy of Big Joe Turner and giving an equally bluesy twist to John Fogerty's "Don't Look Now," while removing the blues that had characterized Los Lobos' original version of "Down on the Riverbed" in favor of a banjo-driven folk arrangement. The opening rendition of John Stewart's "California Bloodlines" establishes the album's theme; the closing "Surfer Girl" is a stunner, **Alvin's** most tender vocal to date, giving the Beach Boys ballad a warmth that borders on reverence.



# Mixtape

Indie Hero Collection  
Builder Vol. 1  
August 2010



**THE APPLES IN STEREO**  
**NEW MAGNETIC WONDER**  
YEP ROC

After a five-year absence, **Apples in Stereo** returned in 2007 with a sprawling and lush masterpiece. Their founding principle of the DIY approach to recording has remained in place, but the nearly 15 years of technological progress has made such ways of working yield significantly more robust sounds. Robert Schneider's songs have always harked back to the pop artistry of Brian Wilson and Jeff Lynne, as well as such near contemporaries as Pavement. **New Magnetic Wonder** offers a lush sweep of sound. It's varied, dazzling, and full of surprises. There's the keyboard-based pop of "Same Old Drag," the hypnotic muscle of "Sundal Song" (sung by drummer Hilarie Sidney) and the sprawling, four-part "Beautiful Machine." Depending on who's listening and what song they're hearing, there are many different ways to describe this band. Ultimately, they gently demand that you take them on their own terms, rewarding handsomely those who make the glorious plunge.

**NICK LOWE**  
**JESUS OF COOL (REISSUE)**



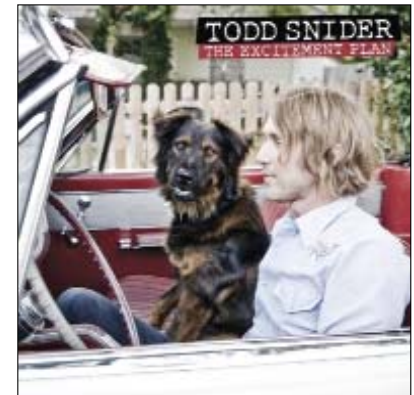
YEP ROC

2008 marked the 30th anniversary of **Nick Lowe's** seminal 1978 album **Jesus of Cool**. The album, released in the U.S. as **Pure Pop for Now People**, marks the beginning of one of the most storied and influential solo careers in pop music and marks the true emergence of a songwriting monolith. The album is a literal compendium of 25 years of pop music history. Here, the sweet melodies of pre-Beatles pop, the energy of the British Invasion, the excess of glam and elements of ska and new wave don't blend but stand side by side on the field of battle, each one willing to lay down his life for the other. This 30th anniversary edition of the album combines the original and U.S. versions and adds seven bonus cuts — making this the definitive version of this undisputed pop masterpiece.



**LIAM FINN**  
**I'LL BE LIGHTNING**  
YEP ROC

Indie wunderkind **Liam Finn** burst onto the musical landscape with the force and presence of an artist twice his age. The then 23-year-old New Zealander played nearly every instrument on his first solo release **I'll Be Lightning**, a responsibility he doesn't relinquish when performing live. During his raucous yet intimate performances, **Liam** utilizes effects pedals to create, sample and loop bass, guitar, drums, vocals and even Theremin. **Liam's** sound ranges from foggy and intimate to fuzzed-out garage but melodies are always the order of the day. On **I'll Be Lightning**, **Liam** has translated the shambolic energy of his live show onto vintage 2-inch tape, yielding a studio album of frightening power and endless hooks.



**TODD SNIDER**  
**THE EXCITEMENT PLAN**  
YEP ROC

Street corner prophet and good time buddy, **Todd Snider**, has been championing the overlooked and underappreciated for over 15 years. **The Excitement Plan** is an album that combines social commentary, gypsy recession recovery plan and Soul-Folk in to one unified masterpiece. Self-awareness never sounded so good as **Todd** and crack sidemen Jim Keltner and Greg Liesz team up with Grammy-winning producer Don Was (Bob Dylan, Rolling Stones) for an album that exemplifies Snider's by-your-wits lifestyle and once-an-age lyricism.



## JOHN DOE AND THE SADIES COUNTRY CLUB

YEP ROC

In true honky tonk style, **Country Club** is the bastard child of a drunken promise. A post show hangout between X & the Knitters, **John Doe and The Sadies** produced the idea to join forces to make an album of country songs. Both rock n roll and country music are littered with the ghosts of broken promises, but this one was destined to become reality. Timeless sounds abound on **Country Club**, driven by **Doe's** gorgeously rough-hewn vocals, the dueling thousand pound chops of the guitar-wielding Good brothers and **The Sadies** world-class rhythm section of Mike Belitsky and Sean Dean. Classic tunes by Merle Haggard and Waylon Jennings stand alongside corks by Tammy Wynette and Roger Miller, and four originals - three from **The Sadies** and one courtesy of the timeless pairing of **John Doe** and Exene Cervenka..



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## ROBYN HITCHCOCK & THE VENUS THREE OLE! TARANTULA

YEP ROC

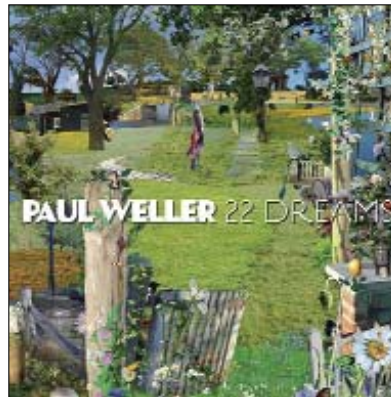
In 30 years of recording with the Soft Boys and solo-wise, **Robyn Hitchcock's** enduring brand of madcap mayhem has raced between English punk, acoustic folk and sonically lush pop. But by teaming with Seattle pals Pete Buck (REM) and Scott McCaughey (The Minus 5), **Hitchcock** made a return to garage rock not heard since 1989's **Queen Elvis**. Buck's indelible guitar instills a chiming luster to songs like "Underground Sun" and "Red Locust Frenzy," while McCaughey provides a random, finger-snapping piano to the delightful "Belltown Ramble," which finds **Hitchcock** serving as the clever hobnobbing tour guide of his favorite Emerald City neighborhood. As usual, a sharp cockney twang is **Hitchcock's** best instrument, carving up the scatty title song as aptly as his ode to San Francisco "A Man's Gotta Know His Limitations" Briggs" or his salute to late bassist Arthur Kane, "NY Doll."

## THE REVEREND HORTON HEAT REVIVAL

YEP ROC



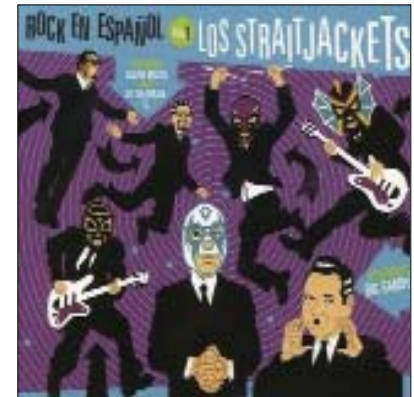
Listening to some of the lyrics on **Revival** might give long-time fans of **Reverend Horton Heat's** madcap, sleaze-loving rockabilly pause. The opening track is a narrative of a man looking back on the things he regrets, hoping for redemption. Elsewhere, "Someone in Heaven" is a traditional country ballad, which is either about the loss of a loved one or turning to the Lord. "We Belong Forever" is a sweet, down-tempo love song that drips with sincerity. What's going on here? Well, it might be that the **Reverend** himself (guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter Jim Heath) is growing up and mellowing out a bit. Or it might be that he's just trying to psych listeners out, because **Revival** is still jammed with yee-ha guitar riffs and giddy-up rhythms. The sound is still straight rock & roll, flavored with country, blues, and a healthy dollop of punk energy.



## PAUL WELLER 22 DREAMS

YEP ROC

Surprises have always been part of the artistic vernacular for **Paul Weller** — the man who changed rock forever with The Jam, explored a host of eclectic influences with The Style Council and cemented his position as the patriarch of Brit pop with his legendary solo work. **22 Dreams** is the latest chapter in a creative journey spanning 30 years, with material spanning the full breadth of popular music rock to classical, avant garde to funk and spoken word to experimental. In addition to a cast of **Weller's** frequent collaborators including Steve Cradock and producer Simon Dine, **22 Dreams** also features some of the largest beneficiaries of Weller's incalculable musical influence (i.e. Noel Gallagher and Graham Coxon). The spirit of collaboration and spontaneity resulted in one of **Weller's** most spirited works and one that is sure to expand the artistic canon of the one and only Modfather.



## LOS STRAITJACKETS ROCK EN ESPAÑOL VOL. 1

YEP ROC

Between their name, stage introductions spoken in a uniquely twisted form of Spanglish, bizarre *lucha libre* attire, and ongoing association with Latino rockabilly revivalist Big Sandy, Spanish has always been a major facet of **Los Straitjackets'** shtick. So it's little surprise that the Nashville-based garage/surf/twang/trash rockers decided to head south of the border for an all-covers album. You don't need to *hablar español* to shimmy, shimmy, shake along with the quartet. Guest vocals from Cesar Rosas of Los Lobos (who also produced the disc), Little Willie G. of East L.A.'s vintage Thee Midnitters, and Big Sandy bring a soulful strut to these punchy stompers. Let the fiesta begin!