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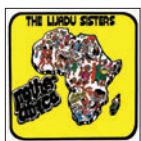
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to the Beach Boys-inspired howls of “Back of Your Neck” and the spitting, raucous “Beach Sluts.” Even the grunged-out ballad “Free Drunk” has that disaffected adolescent vibe, like Gatesmith and company smoked a ton of pot in their parents’ SoCal garage before slamming out the chords on half-broken guitars. Seriously addictive and totally fun, *America Give Up* is beach punk for the wasted teenager in all of us. [MOLLIE WELLS]



DAMIEN JURADO
Maraqopa
(Secretly Canadian)

Long-time indie artist Damien Jurado’s new album *Maraqopa* is his 10th full-length and his second effort with producer Richard Swift, who previously worked with Jurado on 2010’s praiseworthy *Saint Bartlett*. The 11 tracks on *Maraqopa* tell a sweeping tale of transient Americana fit for the great wide open. If Bon Iver and the Band had a jam session, the result would be the folk-inspired tracks found here. “Nothing is the News” is a standout bluesy track with jazz guitar. On “This Time Next Year,” the gentle lull of Jurado’s vocals amplifies the sense of yearning and longing in the lyrics, while “Working Titles” exemplifies Jurado’s no-fuss musical style. *Maraqopa* is a record packed full of dreamy tracks, so all you have to do is sit back and let your imagination take control. [LARA STREYLE]



THE LIJADU SISTERS
Mother Africa
(Knitting Factory)

The Lijadu Sisters, cousins of Afrobeat trailblazer Fela Kuti, led the way for Nigerian female musicians in the ’70s. *Mother Africa*, the second release in a four-album reissue project, was recorded with more than 20 instruments and written entirely in Yoruba, the sisters’ native language. Interpreting the meaning of the lyrics is unnecessary: vocal harmonies tell each song’s story through a tone that teeters between love and lament. A multilayered percussive landscape is created with an abundance of traditional drums, from the *gangan* (known as the “talking

drum” for its human-like vocal qualities) to the *iya ilu* (the “mother drum”). “Osupa I” is a folksy, acoustic ode to the moon, while the funk-heavy, distorted “Bayi L’ense” is about the disappointment that comes with betrayal. “Orin Aro” is an upbeat dirge celebrating the memory of lost loved ones. Thanks to this reissue series, the sounds and spirit of the Lijadu Sisters will exist as more than just a distant memory. [KRISTINA ENSMINGER]



MARK LANEGAN BAND
Blues Funeral
(4AD)

Mark Lanegan is one prolific guy. In the past he has performed as one half of the Gutter Twins and collaborated with Isobel Campbell and Queens of the Stone Age, and now leads his own band on *Blues Funeral*. Lanegan’s talent for combining blues, rock, folk, and industrial is present throughout. Fuzzed-out guitars reminiscent of a dentist’s drill drive “The Gravedigger’s Song” until it comes to a screeching halt. Lanegan—who has one of the finest voices in popular music—also demonstrates his raspy crooner side on slower tracks like “Breeding Bloody Water” and the melancholy “Phantasmagoria Blues.” The jangling, French-pop “Gray Goes Black” and the dance-oriented “Ode to Sad Disco” stand out, but full-on rockers like “Riot In My House” and “Quiver Syndrome” really tear it up. Lanegan lent his voice to some of Queens of the Stone Age’s best tunes, and the band’s frontman Josh Homme makes an appearance here—the album’s also produced by Alain Johanness, former QOTSA guitarist. The mixture of all these long-time collaborators is like peanut butter and chocolate together—it just works.

[MICHAEL LEVINE]



NITE JEWEL
One Second of Love
(Secretly Canadian)

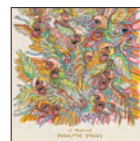
If Nite Jewel’s debut album was a cool, hazy morning, then *One Second of Love* is a hot summer night. A slick combo of R&B and electronica (reminiscent of the work of recent collaborator Dâm-Funk) has



CATE LE BON
Cyrk
(The Control Group)

WELSH MUSICIAN CATE Le Bon’s love for music blossomed when she was a child who discovered her father’s records. That influence is obvious in her ’70s-era rock style and her austere, intentionally understated Nico-esque vocals. However, unlike other chanteuses who favor quiet subtlety, Le Bon’s songs—aided in part by percussion, dynamic tempos, and fast guitar riffs—never lull. On the less tightly organized “Julia,” her smoky voice brings to mind the contemplative style of Cat Power. Le Bon’s gloomy, enigmatic lyrics are best showcased on the bittersweet track “The Man I Wanted,” which finds her lamenting having given too much to a paramour. The song’s slow, flat tone soon slips into a more glam rock-flavored melody that allows Le Bon to fully showcase her impressive range. There is a certain melancholy present in her lyrics, but Le Bon’s upbeat melodies give light to her dark musical journeys. [ADRIENNE URBANSKI]

replaced the sparse synth lines and gentle lo-fi hums of 2009’s *Good Evening*. The most striking change of all, however, is in Ramona Gonzalez’s voice. Her airy, distant cries have matured into full, rich, and surprisingly strong vocals that sound less like Sally Shapiro and more like Prince. Her decadent, throaty delivery of standout track “In the Dark” spotlights her deep range, while the aggressive funk vocals of “She’s Always Watching You” reveal a newfound confidence. But fans of Nite Jewel’s flickering ’80s synths need not worry, as *One Second of Love* (especially album closer “Clive”) retains plenty of the ethereal vintage-style sound that made her first album so compelling. [SARAH C. JONES]



OF MONTREAL
Paralytic Stalks
(Polyvinyl)

In the 15 years since *Of Montreal* began, co-founder Kevin Barnes has steered the band along a trajectory that straddles a thin line between masterful indie pop and avant-garde excess. Nowhere is that balancing act more evident than on *Paralytic Stalks*. For instance, “Ye, Renew the Plaintiff” begins with perfect pop hooks over slabs of skittering bedroom electronica—the kind of funky territory Barnes staked out on 2010’s *False Priests*—but at eight-plus minutes, the track is weighed down by too many ideas. Clocking in at more than 13 minutes, “Authentic Pyrrhic Remission” is afflicted with the same