AITOR OCHOA AND MAD MULE JULIANNA RIOLINO LA PERRA BLANCO MICAH P. HINSON BLAZE BAYLEY 091 GLUECIFER

"...we are ugly but we have the music".

ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE



Issue 50. March 2025

091
Something of a Myth

Rock Bottom Magazine

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Rock Bottom Magazine ISSN 2023061500443

Published by the Rock Bottom Magazine Cultural Association, a non-profit organization.

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GRACIAS.

In This Issue

6. Aitor Ochoa and Mad Mule
8. 50 Issues Cris
10. Interview Javier Cosmen
13. 50 Issues José Antonio García
14. La Perra Blanco
22. Julianna Riolino
24. Bootleg Series
25. 50 Issues Óscar Avendaño
26. The Open Hand: Micah P. Hinson
30. For the Love of Art: The Saints
32. 50 Essential Albums in 50 RBM Issues
46. Blaze Bayley
48. 50 Issues José Ignacio Lapido
49. Capi's Corner: The Diesel Dogs
50. 50. Keep Soul Alive: Darrell Banks
52. 50 Issues Manola
53. Spotifilm
54. 091. Interview José Ignacio Lapido
61. 091. Interview José Antonio García
63. 091. Interview Raúl Bernal
65. 50 Issues Pájaro
66. Ninja's Corner:
67. 50 Issues Oscar The Hunter
68. The Rock of the Teenage Angels. Mondo Turbio.
70. Song for an Ex
73. Lilith Fair, the Power of a Community Against a Treacherous Industry
75. 50 Issues Rhyan Paul
76. Film and TV
80. Gluecifer
82. Reviews
87. Point Blank. 1976: America on the Couch
90. Lisa Dominique
92. AJOU!

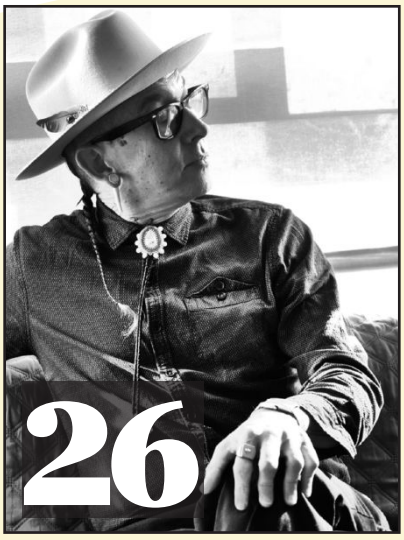
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Aitor Ochoa and Mad Mule



Julianna Riolino



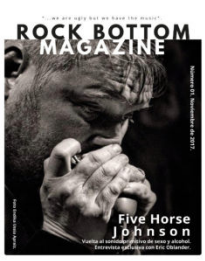
Micah P. Hinson



091



Gluecifer


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Five Horse Johnson
Vuelta al sonido primario del rock y alcohol. Entrevista exclusiva con Eric Oblander.


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
"El amor al arte es algo que dice mucho de las personas que lo practican".
Lapido


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
"Music is medicine".
Greg Strzempka
Raging Slab


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Redd Kross
"Rock, weird, fun, trashy... real".
Steven McDonald


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
José Antonio García
Imprimiendo personalidad.


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Miguel Ríos
La leyenda continúa

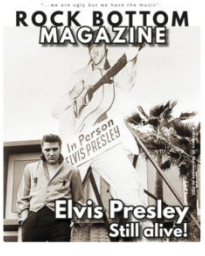

"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
The Kinks.
50 años de Village Green.


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Jim Jones
& The Righteous Mind


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Los Deltonos
¡Fresco y crujiente!


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Guadalupe Plata
Sonidos tribales desde el pantano.


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
091
Fe en el Rock & Roll


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
In Person ELVIS PRESLEY
Elvis Presley
Still alive!


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Black Pumas
El soul del nuevo milenio.


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Morgan
Talento desbocado.


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Manola
Pasión y valentía sonora


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Cádiz es Rock
Una escena en ebullición


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Wendy James
High class queen


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Los Farelli
Rock and roll en la sangre


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Los Estanques
Psicodelia de Barrio.


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Derby Motoreta´s Burrito Kachimba
Nuevo elemento alquímico


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Downtown Losers
Apocalypse blues


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Belako
Nueva generación


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Bala
Run free!


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
The Neptune Power Federation
Shockrock desde Australia


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Sarria
Vocación de clásico


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Especial
Los Soprano


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Riverboy
Espejismos de ilusión


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
091
On the road again!


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
The Killer Barbies
Reinando de nuevo por todo lo alto


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Redd Kross
Entrevista con Steven McDonald


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Belako
Nueva generación


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Entrevista exclusiva
Gary Lee Conner
30 años de "Sweet Oblivion"


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Sex Museum
Los reyes del underground


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Bob Dylan
Especial gira España


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
El Padrino
50 años de una obra maestra


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Goat
Psychedelic voodoo
Entrevista al Sueñoman


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Lady Banana
Stoner callejero, rabia postmoderna


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Screamin' Cheetah Wheelies
Say goodbye to say hello


"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
The Electric Alley
El noble arte de resistir


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ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
FREE GAZA
FREE PALESTINE

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ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Leonor Watling & Leo Sidran
with The Groovy French Band
El arte de dejarse llevar

"...we are ugly but we have the music"
ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE
Azkena festival'24
Celebración del Rock 'n Roll

FIRST OF ALL

Editorial
by javistone

THIS IS ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE

AND IT IS BUILT ON A FOUNDATION OF ARTISTIC NECESSITY

We've reached issue number 50, and it's funny how suddenly you remember that this magazine was born out of another milestone: the tenth anniversary of my blog, javistone.com. Back then, when I published a book to mark that decade, I wanted to involve friends who had crossed paths with the blog along the way. Jesús Sánchez, Tali… those names ring a bell? Those collaborations, and the sheer joy of creating something I loved not alone but with friends, sparked the need to recreate that sense of community around rock and roll. For many of us, it's fuel, it's oxygen, it's food for the soul. If you're one of us, you know exactly what I mean. If you're not, you probably never will.

I just hope the magazine doesn't share the same fate the blog did after that burst of activity. The blog eventually went silent, though if it could speak, it would surely be proud of what has grown from it. It had a life of its own for years.

If I said this issue is special, I'd be both lying and telling the truth. Special? Every issue is special. Every word published in Rock Bottom Magazine matters to us. The fact that we show up on social media every two months is special. Yes, we took a break before the summer and skipped an issue. No one seemed to mind, and no one complained. Still, every time I publish a new issue, it feels extraordinary, because it is. It's like having a child. How could you not feel each one is special? You've poured your life into making it happen, and when you finally see it stand on its own, you feel pride. It's a hell of a feeling. Huge. Intimate. Solitary, in a way, but immense. You've created something out of nothing, shaped it, and now you open your hands and let it fly. What happens next is no longer up to you. And that, too, is special.

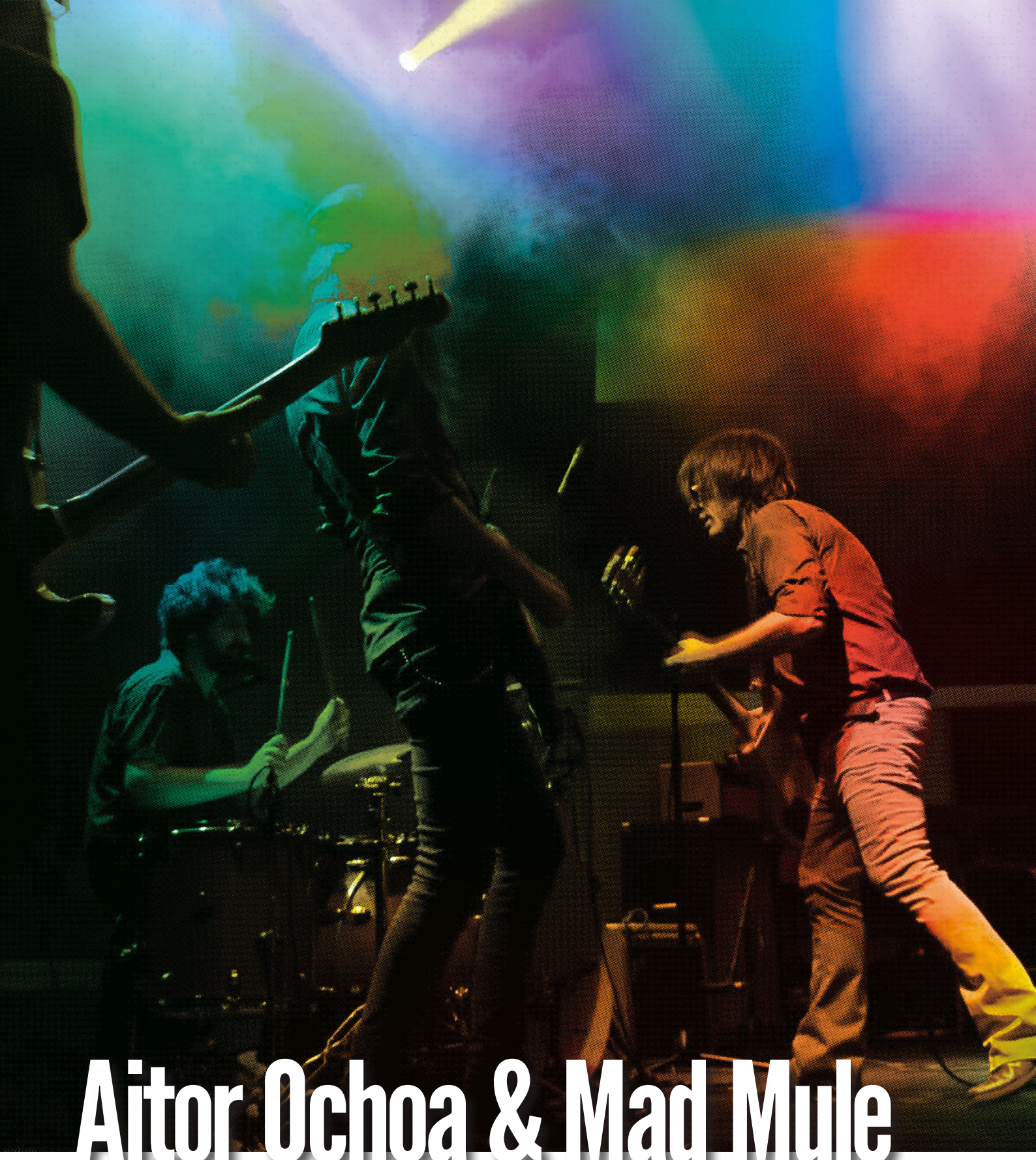
But this one is special even among the special ones. The issue you're holding is number fifty. Fifty. I'll say it again: fifty. It still moves me every time I say it. Jesús, being from Granada, always said he didn't expect us to make it past the second or third issue. Back then, he didn't know me as well as he does now. Of my many flaws, giving up isn't one of them. When you love something, you persist. And I've persisted in this project called Rock Bottom Magazine, inviting anyone who comes close to be part of it, proving that it's still possible to exhume this thing called rock and roll, along with everything that circles around it: film, comics, literature.

For me, rock and roll goes hand in hand with freedom and art. It's an attitude. And in the times we're living through, that attitude feels revolutionary. Revolution means wanting to change the world. Yes, we want to move forward. And any real progress will come through freedom and culture, or it won't come at all.

Fifty issues. 091 and Gluecifer on the cover. Friends sharing these pages with us. How could I not be moved?

Thank you, all of you. Here's to fifty more, as long as Trump or a meteorite don't get in the way.

50 SOLO ES EL COMIENZO



Aitor Ochoa & Mad Mule

The Strength of Family

Every year, as the final quarter rolls around, one or two records inevitably slip past your radar and end up missing from those celebrated "Best of…" lists. 2025 was no exception. One of those overlooked releases was "Off the Grid", which came out in December and marks the second album by Cantabria's Aitor Ochoa alongside Mad Mule. Far from being mere backing musicians, the band make it clear they are a solid unit, a family worth betting on for the long haul. In the following interview, Ochoa talks about that and much more.

It's been seven years since the previous album. Did "Off the Grid" take that long to make, or were you just waiting for the right moment?

It took a while, but that's because of who we are. Financially speaking, we're broke. On top of that, we're naïve enough to have learned the craft of recording and mixing pretty much from scratch on this album. That was motivating and challenging, but it also meant the process moved at a very uneven pace. Add to that the emotional side of things, most of us in bands carry a few adaptation issues at different levels, and that led to lineup changes that stirred things

up more than I would've liked.

What was it like moving on from Soul Gestapo to leading what looks like a solo project?
In my case, not that different. Soul Gestapo had basically become a solo project disguised as a band. So I tried the opposite: a band disguised as a solo project. Not to put my name front and center, but maybe to have more room to maneuver when a band hits one of those inevitable dead ends.

The name Aitor Ochoa & Mad Mule suggests a songwriter with backing band. Are Mad Mule a stable unit? How do you shape the sound?
Mad Mule has never been a backing band. That concept doesn't even sit right with me. Luis and Fere are my friends, my damn brothers, for better or worse. We clash and we care about each other. It's natural selection that's brought us here. I may write the songs, but their input, musically and in attitude, is huge.

Several drummers appear on the record. What was it like recording each song with a different drummer?
Chaotic, honestly. Because we're not just people who get together to play, we sometimes argued more than necessary, like a family, and needed space. Still, the album kept moving forward. I don't think you should wait too long to record songs once they're written, you lose perspective. Along the way, friends like Curro and Ral stepped in to help, and I'll always be grateful. But the fun is in the journey, not the destination.

There's a more melodic edge this time compared to the rawer tone of the previous album. Was that intentional?
I try not to overthink arrangements, but self-producing lets you focus on details, like which harmonies work. Stylistically, it's probably more complex than the last one. That said, I don't think I can fully control that. I started at fourteen playing punk, but even then I was figuring out chords to Buddy Holly or Elvis Costello songs. I'm still doing that.

Your lyrics feel very direct and emotionally exposed. Are your songs pieces of yourself?
What choice do I have? Early on, lyrics are often secondary, just a vehicle. When they stopped being an exercise and became a kind of cheap self-therapy, things got interesting. As you lose your fear, songwriting gets more fun. Even when I sound ridiculously dramatic, I try not to take myself too seriously.

Guitar clearly drives your songs. Are you more of a guitarist or a singer?
I don't fit the singer role, no matter how wide you define it. Mark Lanegan, Antonio Molina or GG Allin, pick one, I don't see myself there. I'm a guitarist who was forced to sing. I've always seen myself that way. Singing alone… what would I even do with my hands? Nothing good, that's for sure.

Reviewers have mentioned Dom Mariani, Neil Young & Crazy Horse, Jason Molina, Alejandro Escovedo, Chuck Prophet and Deniz Tek as references. Quite a mix. Do you relate?
I haven't listened much to Mariani, but the others, absolutely. I'd add Roky Erickson, Paul Westerberg, Fred "Sonic" Smith, and the whole world of Townes Van Zandt or Guy Clark to make it even messier. It's always surprising and fun to see who people compare you to. It means someone's listening.



> ***Somos bastante testarudos y puede que hasta tengamos un propósito. ¿Cuál? Ni idea, quizás fracasar estrepitosamente y seguir viviendo nuestra fantasía con la misma determinación hasta que deje de ser importante para nosotros.***

Is self-management the only way to make rock in this country?
Self-management is rewarding if you understand how things work and can handle it. But it depends on where you're starting from. It's not the same being an established band with an audience as being unknown. Having people who back you, booking shows or promoting what you do, helps with continuity. We haven't fully embraced that, partly because some of those things matter less to us than they probably should. We're stubborn. Maybe we even have a purpose. What is it? No idea. Maybe to fail spectacularly and keep living our fantasy until it stops mattering. Many of our rock heroes were glorious losers. Maybe we romanticize that. In any case, if you want to make rock, or black metal, or boleros, you just have to do it. From the gut. That's the only way I know. If it's black metal, burning down a church might help.

Playing live must be one of the most rewarding parts, yet it's increasingly difficult. Is that the main battle?
I wish it were easier to play more shows, but we'll play wherever we're welcome. We'll give it everything, even if only one person shows up. That said, I'm tired of the victim mentality in music. Social media is full of armchair philosophers, middlemen nostalgic for the days they could take a cut, and "great talents" waiting to be discovered while dismissing everyone else's effort. This is the reality. There will always be obstacles. Times change. But there are still amazing bands, venues willing to host them, and people who want to enjoy the damn music. That's what matters. The real battle is with yourself and with a hostile environment. And hell, it's not a horse. It's a damn mule.

Thank you very much for your answers, and best of luck with the album.

Marcos Sánchez

Fifty issues... Wow!

By Cristina Rodríguez

I had the good fortune, I would almost say the privilege, of being there alongside Javistone and Jesús Sánchez as part of the team, two Andalusians and a Canary Islander, who brought this magazine to life back in late 2017. A project that was, and still is, a challenge in a cultural and geographical environment where our generation, Generation X, was losing visibility and relevance, caught between those clinging to the past (myself included) and modern algorithms burying our tastes and our style.

The idea was to give an outlet to everything that was boiling inside us and that we didn't see reflected out there, giving voice and space to artists who continue to work with passion and determination in the echo chamber that platforms lock us into. And to do it as a free digital PDF download, in a format few people believed in.

It is not easy to carry a project like this forward, and its success is mainly due to the enormous work, dedication and effort of Javistone and Jesús, who have known how to attract and surround themselves with great collaborators.

I remember those early days of the magazine with great affection. Everything was an adventure, so many decisions, choosing formats, content, covers, layout, logos, proofreading, trial and error. Receiving feedback on what we were doing was almost an obsession (thank you again, LaChandra, for your vital support in those early days). We created Spotify playlists, recorded podcasts and Javistone began a regular slot on Onda Cero Jerez to announce each new issue and share its content. In the middle of 2020, he also organized a gathering with some of the most relevant voices in the rock scene in Cádiz. On top of that, we launched the publication and sale of an annual printed summary, along with several thematic specials.

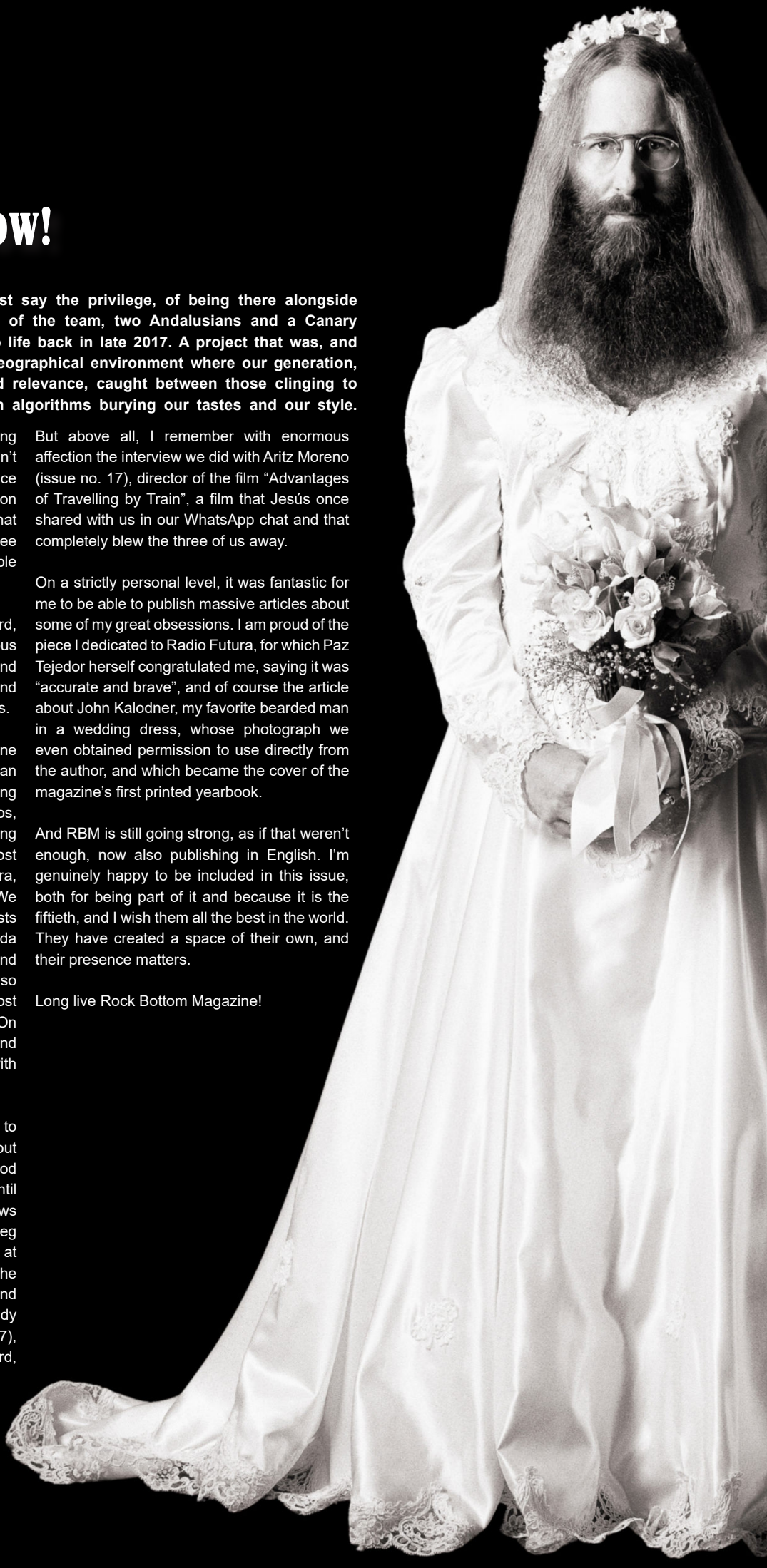
We shared great moments, managing to interview artists and publish articles about some of our favorite stars. From the period when I collaborated with the magazine, up until 2021, some of my favorites were the interviews we did with Redd Kross (issue no. 3), with Greg Strzempka from Raging Slab (issue no. 4) at a very difficult time in his life, during which he gave us an intimate and sincere testimony, and the cover and interview we dedicated to Wendy James of Transvision Vamp (issue no. 17), which was both interesting and straightforward, and for which she thanked us warmly.

But above all, I remember with enormous affection the interview we did with Aritz Moreno (issue no. 17), director of the film "Advantages of Travelling by Train", a film that Jesús once shared with us in our WhatsApp chat and that completely blew the three of us away.

On a strictly personal level, it was fantastic for me to be able to publish massive articles about some of my great obsessions. I am proud of the piece I dedicated to Radio Futura, for which Paz Tejedor herself congratulated me, saying it was "accurate and brave", and of course the article about John Kalodner, my favorite bearded man in a wedding dress, whose photograph we even obtained permission to use directly from the author, and which became the cover of the magazine's first printed yearbook.

And RBM is still going strong, as if that weren't enough, now also publishing in English. I'm genuinely happy to be included in this issue, both for being part of it and because it is the fiftieth, and I wish them all the best in the world. They have created a space of their own, and their presence matters.

Long live Rock Bottom Magazine!



AÑO 8

NUEVO ANUARIO EN PAPEL



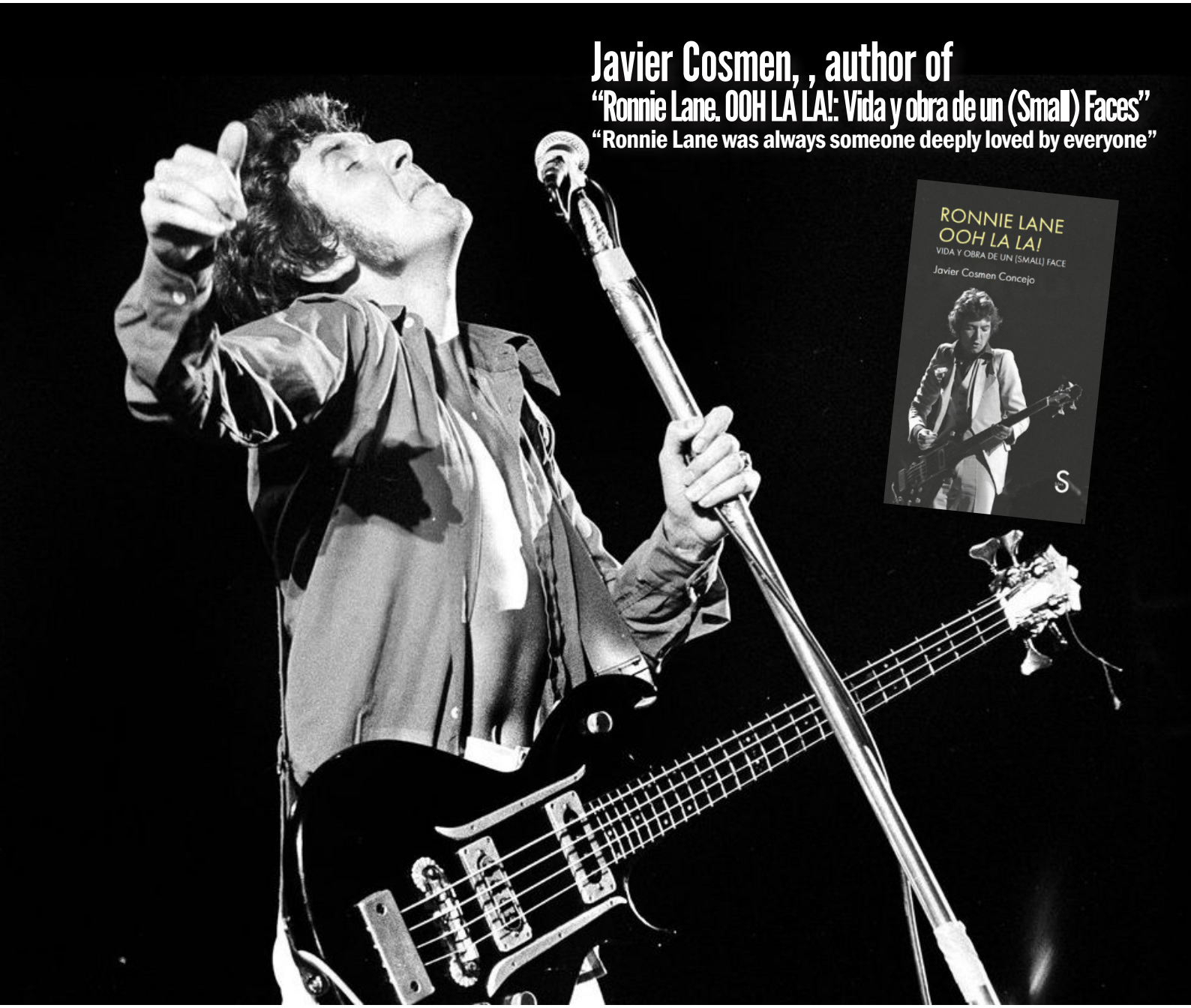
YA DISPONIBLE

Otro nuevo anuario de la revista digital Rock Bottom Magazine que recoge en formato físico un resumen del trabajo realizado durante los doce últimos meses. Con los enormes Goat en portada, el contenido es apabullante: Sacri Monti, F.A.N.T.A., Sam Cooke, Nat Simons, Las Dianas, Los Farelli, Miles Davis, The Fuzztones, Manola, Baby Huey, Vega, The Cubical, Tom Werman, Dead Boys, Alligator, Maika Makovski, Thee Cha Cha Chas, El Niño Delta, Dunes, Jordi Pujol Nadal, Gene Hackman, The Killer Barbies, Terry Callier, Hippie Death Cult, Guernica Mancini, Lendakaris Muertos, Marina Ferbes, Zålomon Grass, Julián Maeso, Wilson Fisk, Irene Serrano, Mark Lanegan, Ruge Boreal, Los DelTonos, Lagartija Nick, Europe, Edgar Allan Pop, Lionel Richie, Jodie Cash, Bunbury, The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Morgan...

¿Te parece suficiente? Pues hay eso y mucho más.

PVP. 18 €

Javier Cosmen, , author of
“Ronnie Lane. OOH LA LA!: Vida y obra de un (Small) Faces”
“Ronnie Lane was always someone deeply loved by everyone”



Ronnie Lane is one of those figures who do not appear on the first pages of rock and roll history. And yet, personalities like his have been fundamental in the evolution of pop, rock, and folk music over the past decades, and you will hardly find literature in which he is even mentioned. I recall “Las vidas de Brian”, where the singer of AC/DC encountered The Small Faces, and even less so in Spanish. For any fan of the British Invasion, of The Small Faces, The Faces, Humble Pie… coming across “Ronnie Lane. OOH LA LA!: Vida y obra de un (Small) Faces” has been a true blessing. The Madrid-born Javier Cosmen was the one who, at a certain point, after publishing books such as “Rolling Stones, Cómo Se Hizo Sticky Fingers” or “La Quadrophenia de Pete Townshend”, both released by Sílex Ediciones, among others, decided that someone like Ronnie Lane deserved the tribute he had never properly received. An absolutely delightful and essential book. Inevitably, we got in touch with Javier to ask him a few questions.

Why a biography of Ronnie Lane? He is actually a little-known figure, and that is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, writing about someone about whom little is known is interesting, but on the other hand, it may not spark widespread interest.

That was something I was aware of from the very beginning, but I was never seeking general acceptance, only the interest of those who share my tastes. I mean that previously there was no book about Ronnie Lane in Spanish, and it was high time there was one. I think that very fact has made it more appealing. Lane was an essential member of bands like Small Faces and Faces, less popular than others, yes, but no less interesting because of that. Reclaiming him from the past was necessary.

Was there any connection between having previously written about The Who and later wanting to pull on the thread of Lane’s figure? Lane was very close to Pete Townshend, bonded first by their shared interest in the teachings of the Indian master Meher Baba, and they even recorded an album together in 1977.

I suppose there was. When I wrote “La Quadrophenia de Pete Townshend” (Sílex Ediciones), I focused entirely on the character. Just as I have done with Lane, I wanted to investigate his work and his life as exhaustively as possible in order to understand where his compositions came from. And, as you say, it did not take long for me to come across Ronnie Lane. Lane is a musician who becomes more and more interesting the deeper you dig into his life. Especially on a human level. And that was what attracted me most about him.

The Small Faces seem like one of those bands that were on the verge of becoming much bigger, don’t you think? They had songwriting talent and charisma, but what do you think they lacked in order to truly break through? Their problems with record



labels, with their manager… all of that affected them deeply.
It is true that, because of their managers, they never managed to cross the Atlantic to be properly promoted in the United States. However, I believe what affected them most was their own talent. "Ogden's Nut Gone Flake" was their final album, the pinnacle of their creativity, their masterpiece. But the idiosyncrasy of Small Faces also lay in their live performances. And "Ogden's" was virtually impossible to perform live. That ended up frustrating them greatly.

Why do you think Marriott distanced himself so much from the rest of the band? He did not do badly with Humble Pie, although their path to success was also complicated. He is undoubtedly one of my favorite singers and musicians, but he is one of those cursed musicians.
The fact that they could not perform their latest proposal on stage made it impossible for Small Faces to continue evolving as a group. Marriott was particularly disappointed because he was beginning to be drawn to heavier sounds, which other bands were also moving toward. "Wham Bam, Thank You Man" was proof of that. But he ran into the wall of Ronnie Lane, whose musical tendencies were heading in much more traditional and folk-oriented directions. With Humble Pie, Marriott also achieved well-deserved success, but his bad habits, poor decisions, a certain lack of inspiration, along with a bit of bad luck, the combination of all that eventually defeated him.

The career of The Faces is also incredible. In 1969 Rod Stewart was practically nobody. He had even tried out as a singer with The Kinks, something I had absolutely no idea about, I would kill to see those rehearsals with so much ego in one room, as you mention in the book. Yes, he had recorded two fantastic albums with Jeff Beck, but it was when he joined The Faces that his figure truly began to grow. It has often been said that Stewart took advantage of The Faces, that he even ended up devouring the band, but I think there was mutual symbiosis. Especially in the United States, success went hand in hand with the growing importance of Rod's figure.
I agree. It was mutual, and everyone benefited. Both Rod Stewart and Ron Wood had previously toured the United States with The Jeff Beck Group, and that opened the country's doors to the rest of the band. Rod promoted his own songs through The Faces, and The Faces promoted their albums with Rod Stewart at the helm. He even included members of The Faces on his solo records. With all of this, the popularity of both sides grew significantly, economically as well, and that pleased everyone. Except Ronnie Lane, who began to see himself as merely Rod Stewart's backing musician.

In fact, it was Kenney Jones's insistence that Rod should come in as singer that led to the formation of The Faces, since both Lane and Ian McLagan seemed reluctant to bring in another frontman with as many, or even more, ego issues than Marriott. In the end, however, they gave in. Do you think they would have had a real future with Lane as the singer?
I very much doubt it. At best, it would never have been as significant as what they ultimately achieved with Rod Stewart. After all, Lane, McLagan, and Jones had been Small Faces. Everyone expected their new project to feature a powerful voice like Marriott's had been. They might have feared once again suffering from the egotistical singer syndrome, as eventually happened, but it was clear they needed to take the risk. Kenney Jones was very pragmatic; he saw it from the start. And he was right. The success of The Faces is undeniable. It completely eclipsed the legacy of The Small Faces, although I believe both bands remain undervalued. They all made huge amounts of money, recorded great albums, wrote formidable songs, and in the collective imagination tracks like "Stay With Me" and "Oh La La", interestingly the only one sung by Ron Wood, are absolute classics. But the personalities of the two leaders were clearly destined to clash sooner rather than later. What were the reasons that led Lane to leave the band? I understand that the final straw was feeling almost like a backing musician in his own band, as you mentioned earlier. That was one of the reasons. On the other hand, Ronnie Lane was responsible for half of The Faces' compositions, the more reflective and restrained ones. As such, he wanted to perform them on stage himself. But that option was rarely welcomed, in order to avoid slowing down the pace of the concerts. Over time, Rod's figure grew so large that it ended up creatively suffocating Lane, who came to understand that his own artistic evolution had reached its limit within The Faces, since it was no longer being valued as it deserved.

When Lane left The Faces, he was replaced by Tetsu Yamauchi. Tetsu's case is quite unique. Without speaking English, he played in two of my favorite bands, Free and The Faces, replacing none other than Andy Fraser and Lane. How do you think a Japanese musician who did not speak English fluently managed to secure such prominent roles, especially when there were so many excellent musicians in England at the time?

> ***"The dissolution of The Faces was the logical consequence of several factors, not just Ron Wood joining The Rolling Stones. Without Lane, the songwriting partnership that created the band's identity had been crippled."***

Tetsu's selection was very rushed due to the tight schedule of shows The Faces had in the summer of 1973. At that moment, Yamauchi was available, as his project with other former members of Free had not materialized. I would say it was mainly a matter of urgency, but also his fondness for alcohol and a dissolute lifestyle worked in his favor when it came to fitting in with The Faces. What seems clear is that The Faces truly ended with Lane's departure. He had always been the soul of both The Small Faces and The Faces. Moreover, he had in mind becoming something of a gypsy outside social conventions, and the way he lived proved it. In fact, he managed to sustain himself financially for quite some time thanks to the profits from the mobile studio he acquired. For me, building the Lane Mobile Studio was the most responsible decision Ronnie ever made in his life. Dreams are easy to pursue when your wallet is full, but when money runs short, they become just dreams again. Renting out his own studio to major bands such as The Who or Led Zeppelin allowed him to maintain a certain standard of living for a while, until his detachment from material concerns eventually caught up with him.

It is curious that it was Rod Stewart who ultimately brought the band to an end. The decision took everyone by surprise. Did Ron Wood's move to The Rolling Stones play a part? Do you think that if Lane had stayed, he might have kept the band together?
The dissolution of The Faces was the logical consequence of several factors, not just Ron Wood joining The Rolling Stones. Without Lane, the songwriting partnership that created the band's identity had been crippled. In addition, Rod Stewart's last two solo albums, "Never A Dull Moment" and "Smiler", did not receive the expected response from the American audience, so he needed to focus on his own career. It no longer made sense to

continue as they were. On the other hand, Rod Stewart had been the determining factor that, albeit unintentionally, removed Lane from the equation within The Faces. Had Lane remained, Stewart would not have stayed in The Faces, and they would have lost their distinctiveness. Lane's career after his time with The Faces can sometimes seem confusing, even erratic. He collaborated with numerous musicians and formed his own band, Slim Chance, a name he had already proposed when Marriott left, although at that time the others rejected it for being too negative, something like "with little chance". Yet the project never truly took off, despite having a handful of great songs. Why do you think that was? His way of doing things? The fact that folk music in the mid-70s had little audience? He even embarked on ventures such as a circus-style tour that seemed impossible to make sense of. Indeed, the kind of folk music that so interested Ronnie Lane in mid-70s England had virtually no audience. At that time, perhaps he should have moved to the United States, to Texas, where his music with Slim Chance might have been better appreciated. But Ronnie was never driven by economic or pragmatic concerns; he was guided by passion. He was composing what he wanted on his farm in Wales, surrounded by his family, with his own musicians and studio, and his pockets were still full after recently leaving The Faces. That chaotic circus tour, The Passing Show, was the result of this idyllic attitude, which would ultimately prove to be self-destructive.

In 1976, if I remember correctly, there was an attempt to reunite Small Faces, but it could not have gone worse. What exactly happened?

Well, financial necessity created that opportunity, one that Ronnie Lane rejected from the very beginning. They were all at a standstill. Marriott after the dissolution of Humble Pie, and Jones and McLagan after the breakup of The Faces. The only one who was still active was Lane, working on Slim Chance's third album, but like the previous ones, it did not bring him any financial benefit, and in the end he had to agree to the reunion. On the first day of recording sessions for the new material by the revived Small Faces, Marriott's ego led him to treat Lane as if he were merely a session musician under his command. After tensions escalated to the point of physical confrontation, Ronnie walked out the door and never returned.

Shortly afterward, Lane began to experience the first symptoms of multiple sclerosis. It is a terrible disease, and an erratic lifestyle certainly did not help. And yet he had many friends within the profession who supported him throughout. Eric Clapton, Pete Townshend, Bill Wyman… even when Steve Marriott reunited with his old friend, already confined to a wheelchair, he did not hesitate to help him.

Ronnie Lane was always someone deeply loved by everyone. It is true that, at first, when he discovered his illness, his behavior was not the most appropriate. But later he became fully aware of what he was facing and completely changed his attitude toward it. He not only confronted it by taking care of himself physically, but also decided to help other patients. It was then that he turned to his musician friends to organize benefit concerts to raise funds for multiple sclerosis research. Beyond that, they never hesitated to support him financially, given his physical inability to support himself.

> ***The kind of folk music that so interested Ronnie Lane in mid-70s England had virtually no audience. At that time, perhaps he should have moved to the United States, to Texas, where his music with Slim Chance might have been better appreciated. But Ronnie was never driven by economic or pragmatic concerns.***

How were Lane's final years?

Ronnie eventually emigrated to the United States, specifically to Texas. His financial situation had become very precarious, but the musical community welcomed him warmly, and he became a much-loved figure there, performing whenever he could. However, the symptoms of his illness gradually consumed him. He faced hour-long performances seated in a chair, singing to the point of exhaustion, yet still managing to convey, despite everything, the sensitivity that had always defined him.

Thank you very much, Javier.

Thank you as well for helping to bring Ronnie Lane back from the past because, as I write in my book, "recognition immortalizes the memory of the dead who, without excessive ego, truly had something important to say". It has been a pleasure.

Javistone



Let the Noise Never Fade

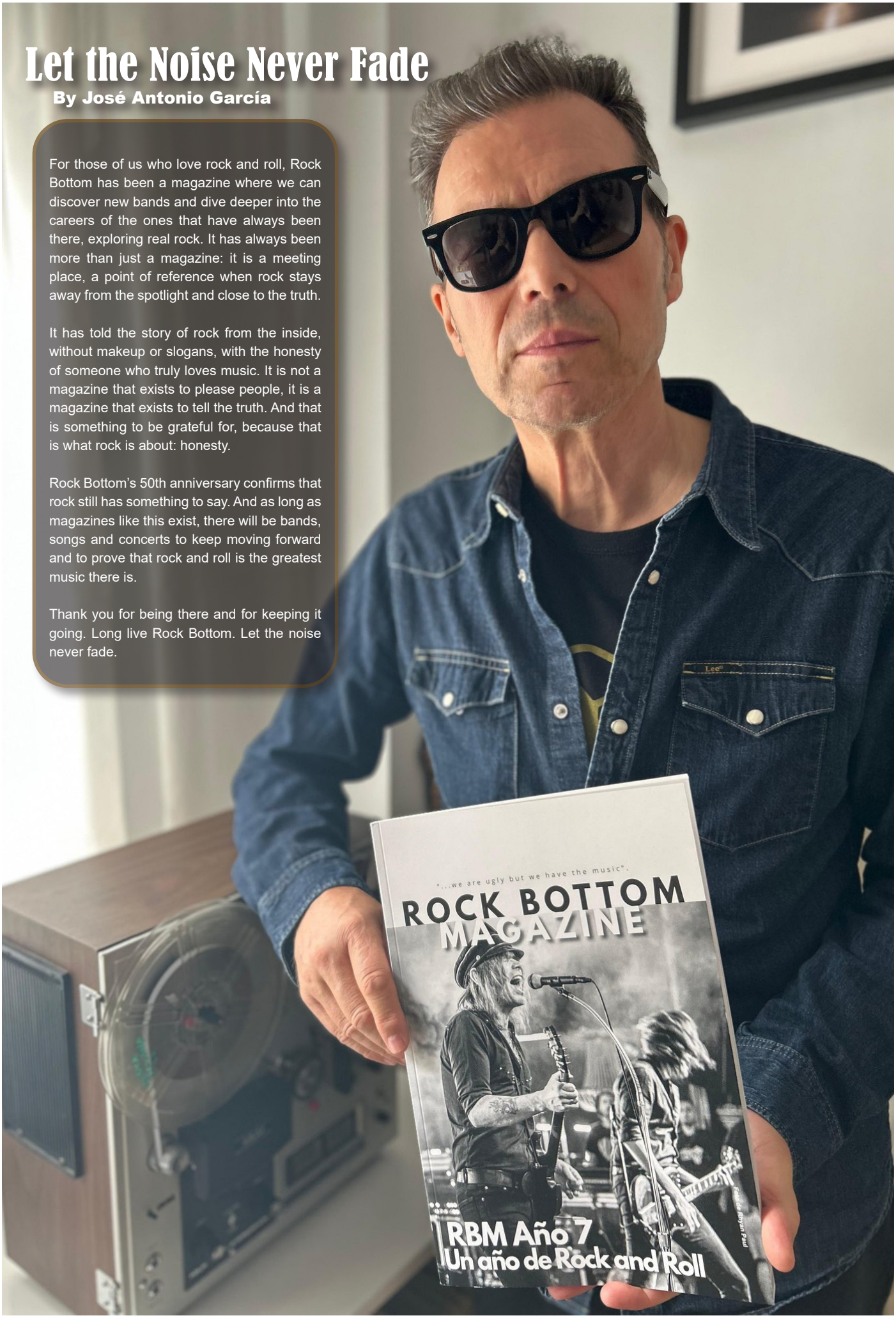
By José Antonio García

For those of us who love rock and roll, Rock Bottom has been a magazine where we can discover new bands and dive deeper into the careers of the ones that have always been there, exploring real rock. It has always been more than just a magazine: it is a meeting place, a point of reference when rock stays away from the spotlight and close to the truth.

It has told the story of rock from the inside, without makeup or slogans, with the honesty of someone who truly loves music. It is not a magazine that exists to please people, it is a magazine that exists to tell the truth. And that is something to be grateful for, because that is what rock is about: honesty.

Rock Bottom's 50th anniversary confirms that rock still has something to say. And as long as magazines like this exist, there will be bands, songs and concerts to keep moving forward and to prove that rock and roll is the greatest music there is.

Thank you for being there and for keeping it going. Long live Rock Bottom. Let the noise never fade.





La Perra Blanco

The Devil's Birth

La Perra Blanco is back, and she's doing what she always does: blowing the roof off. If you thought you'd already seen her at full throttle, you couldn't have been more wrong. Alba is the real deal, an artist through and through, deeply committed to her music, to her craft, right down to the bone. After delivering records as powerful as "Bob & Shake" and pushing her sound further with "Get it out", where she darkened things up with serious finesse, she's now taken a giant leap into a whole new league. She's no longer just the virtuoso guitarist playing classic rock and roll. She's that, sure, but she's so much more. Under the guidance of producer Jimmy Sutton (Pokey LaFarge, Jake La Botz, Daddy Long Legs), and with a standout contribution from JD McPherson, La Perra Blanco has recorded an album that reeks of rock and roll, but with that modern-yet-timeless edge that belongs very much to the here and now. Alba has managed to push her sound forward, letting it evolve into something deeper and more organic, where the guitar serves the song, not the other way around. We sat down with her for a long, in-depth chat about the recording process and about how her life has changed, for the better, over the last two years since we last saw her at the Azkena Rock Festival.

First of all, congratulations on the album, it sounds fucking great.
Thanks so much, Javi.

It's also really cool to see how you keep growing with every record. Are you actually aware of that artistic growth?
Well, I try to be aware of it, but without getting carried away, to be honest.

I've seen you several times now. I've followed you since the first record, I've watched you grow and evolve as an artist, and from my perspective, from the listener's side, it's amazing to witness that process.
It must be interesting the way you see it. From the inside, I don't really notice it that much. But yeah, if I could step outside myself and see it from that angle, it would probably be mind-blowing.

If you could see yourself with that kind of perspective, you'd probably learn from it and enjoy it. Watching an artist you admire grow like that isn't something you get to experience every day.
That's so nice, thank you so much.

This is already your third album, but it feels like you've put out way more.
Yeah, tell me about it, I feel like I'm seventy. Or seventy thousand (laughs).

When you released "Get it out", we talked about how you'd moved from the more



classic rockabilly feel of "Bob & Shake" toward a darker sound, and I remember we even mentioned people like Magic Sam. Now you've kept evolving. The sound of "Lovers and Fears" has that vintage rock vibe, even a bit of swing in tracks like "Raining Love". How did you approach the recording and writing this time? Was the evolution natural or deliberate? Or a bit of both?

It was totally natural. I didn't push myself toward any specific style or direction. That said, you can definitely hear Jimmy Sutton's production. For example, "Raining Love" originally had nothing to do with the vibe it ended up having on the record. I actually loved the way I first brought it in. Some friends, when they heard the final version, were like, "The producer ruined the song!" (laughs). But no, not at all. Jimmy's touch is very noticeable on some tracks, while others stayed pretty much the way I brought them in. With "Hold Me", for instance, the production was obviously worked on a lot, but the melody, the core of the song, the atmosphere, that was exactly what I wanted to create from the start. Nothing was forced. The songs came the way they came. I respect my creativity a lot. I try not to censor it or manipulate what comes out so raw and clean, so to speak. And as for the Black music influence, yeah, it's much more obvious on this record, way more than on the previous one. This time we didn't really touch any "white" styles at all.

Jimmy Sutton has produced artists like Pokey LaFarge, Jake La Botz and Daddy Long Legs. Why Jimmy Sutton?

It was kind of mutual. We chose him, and he chose us. Out of all the producers we had in mind, and there were quite a few names on the table, Jimmy was one of them. A lot of friends, people who really know their stuff, and my manager too, were rooting for him. So I said, okay, reach out to him, send him a message, let's see what happens. And before my manager even had the chance to contact him, Jimmy wrote to me saying he'd love to produce our next record. So yeah, we were looking for him, but he found us first.

What did you like about his work?

He plays American roots music, but he gives it that modern edge, which is exactly what I was looking for. With all due respect to the hardcore rock and roll crowd, the circuit, the festivals, the promoters, I got tired of being stuck in that bubble. I feel like I can offer much more on a broader level, to a wider audience.

That's the thing about art, you have to let it lead you.

Exactly. Otherwise, you just end up boxed in. If I were 72, maybe I'd just sit back and stick with it. But I get bored easily. If I don't have a new challenge, a new goal, I lose interest. And if I'm bored, I'll just walk away. What's the point of doing something that doesn't motivate you anymore?

Right.

That's basically it. In a way it was a conscious decision, because that whole scene was starting to bore me. The same scale, the same people, very closed circuits. Sure, globally it's a decent-sized circuit, but it's not that big either. I was looking for something that would push me. I was still doing the same thing, really, but I wanted to take it one step further, give it a bit of a facelift. I don't want to record everything in analogue with 1950s amps. I'm not into that kind of thing. I want it to sound old, because my songs naturally sound old, but I also want the production to have a quality that works today. I want someone who isn't necessarily deep into rock and roll to hear it and say, hey, I like this. Jimmy is a producer who brings all that together. He works with artists like JD McPherson, who play roots music but know how to give it that edge that connects with a broader audience. That was one of the main reasons, besides the fact that I love his productions. His vision and the way he works were totally aligned with what I wanted to achieve.

> ***Jimmy (Sutton) is a producer who brings all that together. He works with artists like JD McPherson, who play roots music but know how to give it that edge that connects with a broader audience. That was one of the main reasons, besides the fact that I love his productions.***

The other key figure here is JD McPherson, who collaborates with you, and in Spanish, no less, on "Sin Amor". There's obviously a connection between McPherson and Jimmy Sutton, since Sutton has produced him and even played in his band, right? How did that collaboration come about? And how on earth did you convince him to sing in Spanish?

Well, Jimmy has produced several of JD McPherson's records. Specifically "Signs & Signifiers", which I think was one of JD's biggest breakthroughs, and that album really shaped me. When I first started out, put the band together and began getting into rock and roll, that record was everywhere. It's incredible. Jimmy produced it and, yeah, he toured with JD for a few years too. In the end, everything happened very naturally. We met last year at a festival where JD was playing. He'd heard about me, was already following me on social media. We met, hit it off straight away, I really liked him. He told me he'd love to do something together one day, and I said, of course. So while we were recording the album, we started thinking about possible collaborations, and JD's name came up since he'd already offered. What surprised me was that he chose the song in Spanish (laughs). I spoke to my manager, like, "He says he's in, great, amazing… which one do we send him?" And he said, "Send them all, we don't know which one will suit his voice." So we sent everything over, and the next day he tells me he's chosen "Mi Amor". I was like, how is that even possible? (laughs).

Did you speak to him in Spanish or English?

In English. He doesn't speak Spanish at all. But he nailed the recording, you can understand everything he's saying, which was my biggest fear. I thought, what if he ruins the song? (laughs). I sing in English because I actually speak it. But if you're singing in Spanish and you don't speak it, that's trickier. But honestly, when I heard it, I was blown away. I thought, wow, this is so



cool. Imagine hearing that without knowing who JD McPherson is.

I didn't recognize him at first.
Exactly. No one does. Some people told me it sounded familiar, but nobody spots him straight away. It doesn't sound like some foreign guy butchering the language.

You're probably too young to remember Bon Jovi or Sting doing songs in Spanish. That was painful.
I haven't heard them. I guess I'm not missing much (laughs).

Not at all. So, you recorded in Valencia. Did Jimmy come over? And then you mixed in Chicago and mastered in Los Angeles, right? Were you involved in the whole process?
Jimmy came to Spain, to Valencia. We spent two weeks recording there. Then he flew to Chicago with my manager and they finished the record there.

And JD's vocals, where were those recorded?
At his place in the States. He didn't come over. I haven't seen him around here, at least (laughs). I just got the tracks and that was it.

Beyond the evolution of your sound, the big question everyone's asking is about the language switch, since you've started singing in Spanish. And unlike a lot of artists, you don't sound different when you switch languages. It feels totally natural.
Yeah, a lot of people have told me that.

How did that step happen? I also think mixing languages works really well. A strong chorus in English can be very effective, and the whole thing feels seamless.
The mixing wasn't even my idea, it was Jimmy's. The songs I had in Spanish were already in Spanish, and the ones in English were in English. But he suggested blending both languages. He told me, "A lot of the biggest hits in history mix languages." At first I thought it sounded weird (laughs). But I got used to it. After finishing this album, with an American singing in Spanish and me switching between two languages, nothing would surprise me anymore. At the beginning it was a real headache, though.

Who actually pushed you to start singing in Spanish?
I'd love to say it was my idea, but honestly, it was my manager's. And a lot of people had been telling me for a long time, other singers here in Spain too, "Alba, try a song in Spanish, it'll be amazing, people will love it." But it was hard for me because I've never really listened to music in Spanish. It's difficult to create something you don't have references for. Then Jimmy shows up and says, "Alba has to sing in Spanish." I was like, yeah right, the guy who just flew in from Chicago is going to tell me to start singing in Spanish? Give me a break (laughs). But my manager and Jimmy kept insisting, "Just one for the album. Just one."

Which one was the first?
It's funny, because the first one I wrote was



"Devil In My Bed", originally titled "El Diablo en mi Cama". And Jimmy's suggestion was that if the lyrics were in Spanish, the title should be in English. I was like, stop messing with my head! (laughs). The guitar riff in that song, which is my favorite part, has a real hook. I'd been playing it for days, over and over. I felt like there was a song hidden inside it. I kept thinking, there's something here, but nothing came. One day I was playing it at home and a friend said it sounded amazing and asked what it was. I said, "No idea, just something stuck in my head." Then another day, talking to the same friend on the phone, I was like, "I'm so fed up with everyone telling me to sing in Spanish and nothing comes out." And suddenly I said, "You know what? I'm hanging up right now and I'm going to write a damn song in Spanish so everyone can shut up" (laughs). I hung up, sat on the couch, and the song just poured out of me, like it came from another planet. That was the first one. The others were a bit more deliberate.

The first one was the hardest.

Yeah, totally. It was like this huge rush. It felt like giving birth, seriously. Like the devil's birth (laughs).

That actually sounds like a great title.

It does, yeah. But honestly, that was probably the best day of last year, by far. I felt this massive weight lift off my shoulders. It had really been pressing down on me.

Let's talk about the songs on the album. "I Feel Fine" sounds like a straight-up classic, very B.B. King to my ears. It's probably the bluesiest track on the record, although "Supersonic Lover" has a bit of a Howlin' Wolf vibe too. Like you said before, the blues is still very much there in your music, there's no trace of "whiteness" left (laughs).

Yeah, there's not a single hint of rockabilly on this record. The attitude is still there, sure, but sonically and aesthetically, it's gone. The blues is all over the album. Like you said, "Raining Love" leans toward soul, even a bit Motown to me. "I Feel Fine" is pure blues. To my ears it sounds a bit like Johnny "Guitar" Watson, which is what I'm aiming for, and maybe a bit of Jimmie Vaughan too. But of course, Jimmie Vaughan was listening to Johnny "Guitar" Watson as well. "Supersonic Lover" is actually the only song on the album that I didn't write, Jimmy wrote it for me. The guitar parts are mine, the structure of the song too, but the melody and lyrics are his. "Barracuda" is another killer track, a brutal rhythm and blues bopper. But yeah, it's all pretty Black in spirit. I don't hear anything "white" in there, honestly. The whitest thing on the album is probably "La Furia", which is a surf instrumental, and even that doesn't really sound white.

You mentioned "Hold Me" earlier. You said it turned out exactly the way you wanted, but that track sounds very soulful. It's quite different from what you've done before.

"Hold Me" is very special. It's not about love, even though people might think it is. It's about something bigger, something kind of supreme. I don't even know what it is,



and maybe nobody does, but it's something beyond that. The song came to me at a very specific moment. I'd just come back from a run of three or four shows. Sometimes, not always, but sometimes when you come home after a stretch like that, you get this massive emotional crash. A lot of artists feel it. That night was one of those nights. I put on "Lost in Translation"…

Oh wow…

Wait, it gets worse. I ordered Chinese food to go with it. So I finish the movie, eat all the food, and then the emotional crash really hits. That's not exactly a film you watch when you're already feeling low (laughs).

I know… I suddenly felt like crying. I picked up the guitar, and the song just came out. The next day I told Jimmy, "I wrote a really beautiful song." When I explained the whole story, he couldn't stop laughing. "Great plan," he said (laughs). Yeah, fantastic plan.

"Hold Me" has a strong gospel feel, doesn't it?

The whole album has a gospel tint. "Hold Me" is probably the peak of the soul element on the record. It's very deep, and vocally I worked a lot harder than on previous albums. I practiced a lot for this one.

Vocally, you sound much more mature.

For example, "Sin Amor" is hugely influenced by The Staple Singers, one of my all-time favorite bands. Mavis Staple, Pops Staple, the whole family. "Sin Amor" is basically a cousin of one of their songs. It's a direct influence from that guitar style I love so much. I've always listened to gospel. It's one of the genres that's moved me the most. But before, I didn't have the compositional tools, or the guitar skills, or the vocal control to pull it off. And I didn't have Jimmy's production either, which helped me execute what I had in my head. I've always had that impulse, but until now I didn't have the tools to translate it. That's the main difference with this album.

My favorite track is "Three in the Morning". The chorus reminds me a bit of "You Can't Judge a Book by the Cover".

Every song has something fun behind it. When I go into the studio, the songs are usually finished. You don't have much room to create there, because it costs money. You're not going to sit around experimenting endlessly. But on this album, for reasons beyond my control, when we got to the studio only four songs were fully written. The rest were ideas. A phrase, a rhythm, a riff. "Three in the Morning" was one of those. I only had the first part, the line about it being three in the morning and wondering why he hasn't called. Since we only had two weeks in the studio, Jimmy and I would go back to my place every evening around eight and keep working. One day I was writing lyrics for "Sin Amor", and he was helping me with "Three in the Morning". It's funny because the song modulates upward, and as it goes up in key, the time in the lyrics moves forward too. It starts at three in the morning and ends up at six. We wrote it as the days passed, as the hours passed, ideas just kept coming. It's a simple song, but I think it's really fun.

There's something else I wanted to ask you. You seem more restrained on guitar now. Has the way you use it changed? In "Barracuda", for example, you play with a different feel, more sensual. Before you were very forceful, now the power is still there but more contained. Do you feel that? I was talking to José Ignacio Lapido from 091 the other day, and he said something interesting: you have to play with silence, more doesn't always mean better, and you don't have to shout louder to be more intense.

Exactly.

Over time you learn that a song needs space to breathe. Before, you leaned heavily on your guitar virtuosity. You still play incredibly well, but now the song comes first.

I agree, and that was intentional. In our first conversations, I told Jimmy I wanted less guitar on this album. And he said he was about to tell me the same thing. I want to give each song what it asks for. I don't want to show up and say, "This is my album, I'm playing a solo on every track." I've already done that.

And before, we were a trio. If I didn't play a solo, what were we going to do, a drum solo every time?

Please, no endless drum solos (laughs).

Exactly. And imagine a double bass solo every night (laughs). Now we have more budget, more musicians. They were like, "Go ahead, ask for whatever you want." So the songs naturally called for less guitar. That doesn't mean less technical playing. "Barracuda" has serious fingerpicking, not just anyone can pull that off. It might sound arrogant, but again, it's very Johnny "Guitar" Watson-inspired.

And it's a perfect example of guitar serving the song.

Exactly. Same with "Supersonic Lover" and "Devil in My Bed", they have fingerpicking too, but not flashy, screaming guitar parts. I've lost that need to shout through the instrument. I spent years doing that, especially live, because in a trio I had no choice. Now we're five. I can delegate. I trust the band. It would be egocentric to dominate everything when there's a piano and a sax, both lead instruments. Why would I keep hammering away? I'd rather play three solos instead of eight and make them count. If you hear four songs with solos, that's expected on a guitar-driven album. But if only one of them has a solo, when it comes in you go, there she is. That's how I see it now.

I love what you're telling me because it brings us back to the same point: maturity, artistic growth, and that's incredibly cool. I've been around a long time, listened to a

lot of records, and what you're doing has real merit. You're pushing yourself, you're evolving. Not everyone can, or even wants to, do that.

It's something natural. I don't wake up in the morning saying, "Today I'm going to be a better person, a better musician, a better guitarist" (laughs). But through life experience, through the stage, the people I meet, the music I listen to, the documentaries I watch, the books I read… I think you always have to aim to improve, especially as a person. As a musician, sure, I can play guitar better or worse. But if I don't want to grow as a person, then I won't grow as a musician either.

Alba, I've seen plenty of artists who never had that drive. It's not that common to find someone willing to evolve, to leave things behind, like…

The dreadlocks, for example (laughs).

Yeah, that was quite a shock (laughs). Earlier you said you used to want to be front and center all the time, and now suddenly you don't. That's a serious shift in ego.

Totally. It also comes from a process I've been through. Over the last two years I went through some tough situations. According to my therapist, it wasn't depression, it was an existential crisis, but it lasted two whole years, so call it whatever you want. I had a panic attack. It's been a strange couple of years. I don't label them as bad anymore. I see them as positive now.

With an album like this, you have to feel proud. It's shaped by the good and the bad, right?

Honestly, I don't even see it as bad. That experience gave me the biggest lesson of my life. It had to happen. At the time it's awful, especially when you're about to go on tour. Having a panic attack before stepping on stage is no joke. I've spoken to some major musicians, people I won't name, but big names, and they've gone through exactly the same thing. I was once about to play for thousands of people and suddenly I had a panic attack. I had to meditate backstage just to get through it. The day I talked to one of those artists, it changed my perspective. I realized I wasn't alone. That whole process helped me understand a lot of things.

I've never considered myself particularly egocentric, though like anyone I've had my moments. But after going through all that, I got deeply into meditation, Eastern philosophy, philosophy in general. I reached a level of depth I'd never reached before. Like most people, I used to look for happiness outside. Since that mental shift, I don't look for it out there anymore, because it's not there. I've seen that clearly. It was like a revelation. No drugs, nothing like that.

"Lovers And Fears" (Maldito Records)



If "Get It Out" felt like a massive blast of rockabilly and rhythm and blues, Alba Blanco takes things to the next level with her latest work, proving she can take us to the top singing in Spanish as well. Produced by Jimmy Sutton, and featuring the surprising collaboration of JD McPherson, the artist from La Línea de la Concepción strengthens her identity as one of Spain's key guitarists and artists, capable of travelling across every facet of rock and roll while extracting the maximum energy from an album that broadens its musical palette and revisits the deepest American sounds. From the striking "Sin amor", sustained under a romantic aura with a hint of very subtle, yet immensely beautiful soul and country, to the vibrant "Devil in My Bed", driven by a fabulous rhythm section and a pulsating, sensual keyboard. Or, of course, the wonderful ballad "Hold Me", which reaches for the most classic soul with a voice that conveys more heartbreak than we might ever have known. In short, eleven songs revolving around the most anguishing emotions that passion can provoke, well worth a slow and pleasurable listening. Honestly, I don't know what the next step will be for this beast from the south, but why didn't she try singing in Spanish before?

Ada Salas

And that's reflected in your music.

Of course. It's reflected in my music, my attitude as an artist, as a guitarist, as a singer… in the whole record. That's actually why it's called "Lovers and Fears". The title comes directly from that emotional and spiritual process. I've deconstructed myself a lot, as a person and as an artist. When you do that, you realize that less is more, on every level. I've come to the conclusion that I'm not the whole picture. The collective matters more. Now I know I can delegate that energy, that drive I have. And by trusting my bandmates, we grow together. We become bigger.

That ties into my last question. We saw you recently at the Cádiz Solera festival, the third or fourth time I've seen you live. I always enjoy your shows, but that one was by far the best. And a big part of that had to do with what you've just said. The previous time was at Azkena. I don't remember if you already had organ in the band.

Yes, at Azkena we already had Gerard on organ.

I don't remember it standing out as much as it did in Jerez. There I saw real chemistry. I saw a band, an organic band. I saw a different Alba, a different Perra Blanco. My wife had never seen you before and she was blown away. The way you interacted with Gerard, the way you played off each other, it was spectacular.

From Azkena until now we've played a lot of shows. Not just a lot, but very different kinds of shows. Across Spain, across Europe. We've played in extreme circumstances, exhausted. I've been on stage hyperventilating, which I wouldn't wish on anyone, especially as a singer, running out of air (laughs). The funny thing is, the guys in the band didn't even notice. I mean, fine if the audience doesn't, but you guys should notice (laughs). I told them afterward, "I've been hyperventilating the whole show." They said, "No one noticed." Well, if you say I looked fine (laughs). After enough tough moments, you come out stronger.

Not everyone does. That says a lot about you.

I've tried to approach it positively. When I started feeling bad, I realized something wasn't working. I felt depressed. The first thing I did was quit drinking. I didn't drink much, just a few drinks on weekends sometimes, but I cut it out completely. I set strict routines, organized my time, exercised more. I started boxing, which helped me massively. I set rules I couldn't break. For example, no alcohol. I'll never understand people who feel bad and start drinking or taking drugs. That only makes it worse. I quit smoking too. I go to bed at nine-thirty every night. I don't know who I've become or how long this version of me will last (laughs), but for now I'm healthy in mind and body, and that's not a small thing.

Long may it continue. Thanks so much for your time, Alba.

Thank you. Always a pleasure, Javi. Big hug.

Javistone




Si te gusta leernos, también
nos puedes escuchar
Rock Bottom Magazine
PODCAST
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Julianna Riolino

"The Azkena Festival crowd was hands down one of the most amazing audiences I've ever played in front of"



There are artists who move forward step by step, and others who, without making much noise, end up building a universe of their own. Julianna Riolino belongs to the latter. After years of singing, learning, and growing within the Canadian scene, first as part of the machinery of Daniel Romano's band and later defending her own repertoire, her trajectory reveals a steady and honest evolution. From the melancholic intimacy of "All Blue" to the stylistic breadth and creative confidence of "Echo in the Dust", Riolino has been refining a voice that no longer asks for permission. In this conversation we talk about late beginnings, confidence, endless touring, relationships that leave a mark, and that vital need to turn experience into song.

I understand that you've always sung, ever since you were a child, that you were involved in musicals at school, and that it took you a long time to take the step of sharing your own compositions… If it helps at all, it took me thirty years to do it myself… Opening up, whether through songs or in any other way, is never easy. How important was music to you from a young age? Was it an escape route? A means of expression?
Music was everything to me as a child. I was constantly humming or singing along to songs. I don't know what I would do without it, it is a part of who I am.

In 2019 you released your first EP, "J.R.", which may have gone a bit unnoticed. What do you remember about recording and releasing your first work?
We recorded it to tape, it was my first real musical recording endeavor that I didn't somehow sabotage. They hold a special place in my heart and it's nice to listen to how much I've grown since then.

How did you become part of Daniel Romano's universe and end up as a member of The Outfit? What was that experience like?
He asked me to join in the middle of another tour they were on. I got a text from an unknown number asking if I would want to join, and I said yes. I learned a lot about being in a band and a performer and how to work as a team as much as I could until it was time to grow on my own.

In 2022 you released your first LP, "All Blue", which had a greater impact. The Outfit members also collaborated on it, but this time they were at your service. What was it like recording that album? What differences did you notice compared to the EP?
We recorded it during the pandemic, and I felt a bit more confident than I was when we recorded the EP, the songs on it were ones I performed live for years and developed. It was a great but nerve-wracking experience at first. I really enjoyed layering my harmonies the most.

It's been said that the figures of Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris, and The Band hover over "All Blue". Is that true? Are they your main musical influences?
I wouldn't say they are my main influences, but they are influences. I am attracted to many different artists and poets and performers, and I feel like encapsulated by the energy of all that inspires me.

About "All Blue" I read that "Julianna Riolino knows how to capture and highlight beauty before it fades". Do you identify with that observation? I find it very accurate. Music sometimes has an ephemeral beauty, don't you think? "All Blue" clearly has a melancholic air.
I think it's accurate, I think the magic of art is capturing that beauty and connecting and harnessing a collective energy.

"You" is a beautiful song, with a wonderful cadence. What can you tell us about that song?
I wrote that song about liking someone at an inconvenient time. Questioning a person's intentions are true or a result of a shallow desire to be loved.

We saw you at the Azkena Festival, I think it was in 2022 — correct me if I'm wrong — accompanying Romano's vocals, and your presence didn't go unnoticed. What do you remember about that concert?
I remember the muggy heat and thunder and lightning that almost prevented us from playing that evening, the crowd of tens of thousands of spirited people was palpable and I will never forget it. The Azkena Festival crowd was hands down one of the most amazing audiences I've ever played in front of. I hope I get to go back and do it with my music.

In 2025 you release "Echo in the Dust", an album that immediately draws you in. In my opinion, it feels somewhat brighter than "All Blue". Could that be the case? I also see it as more mature and freer in terms of style. I sense you're less constrained by classic folk/country. What do you think?
This record is a representation of the growth I experienced in between "All Blue" and making the record. The result is feeling more confident and experimental in my creative decisions and that in and of itself is very freeing.

"Seed" is a wonderful song, emotionally beautiful and at the same time very powerful in its final stretch. What can you tell us about this song?
I wrote it as I was processing a fork in the road, and realizing I needed to step into my own power. The duality of nurturing others but knowing your own roots needs tending. I really enjoyed the process of developing this song and I'm very proud of it.

"The Less I Know" is another song that feels very special to me. It's a wonderful way to close the album — it leaves you wanting more, wanting to put the record on again. What can you tell us about it?
"The Less I Know" is one of those songs I heard fully in my head and needed to let it out. Watching it unfold in the way it did was a challenge that I really enjoyed tackling. My inspirations for it were Roy Orbison and Tom Petty. I thought ending the record with an echoing self-realization made a lot of sense.

There are moments when you move away from a more folk-oriented sound and lean toward pop, as in "Full Moon", or even punk, as in "It's a Shakedown". What was going through your mind when you decided to record this album?
I think I just listen to and love a lot of different genres of music. I think genre can sometimes be confining and I told myself I was going to serve the songs in the way they needed and not adhere to too many "rules" I followed my instincts and did what felt right.

> ***I am attracted to many different artists and poets and performers, and I feel like encapsulated by the energy of all that inspires me.***

I believe you released it on your own label, MoonWhistle Records. How does someone come to want to create a label to release a second LP? More freedom, but also a lot more work, right?
Yes, freedom, yes more work. Ultimately no one believes in you more than you, so with that being said it felt like the only way to do it.

You've said that "this record helped me learn to accept myself and to love myself. To put myself first and stand on my own two feet", and that it's very focused on romantic, friendship, or professional relationships, and the toxic aspects that can exist in all of them. What do you mean by that?
I think I found myself cycling through unhealthy patterns in my life that left me serving others who weren't serving me. Confronting those patterns through this record helped me grow and become a better version of myself.

In February, a deluxe edition of "On a Bluebird's Wing" is scheduled for release, as a prelude to a European tour. This edition includes three additional tracks, among them the new single "Don't Put Me in the Middle", about which you've said: "I wrote this song while on tour, between long drives, soundchecks, shows, and moments of hopelessness. It was always present in my mind and bringing it to life was cathartic and healing. It's the decompression after the fracture. It's melancholic, resolved, and full of peace." What differences do you find between the songs you write on the road and those you write when you're in the studio or at home?
I always write on the road in pieces, whenever I find the time, whereas when I'm home, I can sort of see different things through. I think the ones I write on the road might be a bit more vulnerable because of that fact.

We're really looking forward to seeing you here. Are there any plans to come to our country?
I would love to come play in Spain. Keep spreading the word and maybe it will happen.

Javistone

SERIE BOOTLEGS

By Sob 2026



A new issue, and that makes 50, of this prestigious publication that brings us the less conventional side of rock, where the most varied and surprising proposals in today's music scene find their place. In such a special issue, I couldn't pass up the chance to be part of its editorial line and mix into the bootleg cauldron things as different as the ones I'm serving up today. Let's take it step by step. The first is a piece of news that made me sad, though it was already well known: the breakup of Jane's Addiction. Their last show in Madrid was superb, and shortly afterward, you already know what happened: punches thrown and the end of a great story.

So I can't miss the chance to share with you this 1989 Ottawa show, spectacular quality, a Perry completely over the top, changing lyrics, teasing the crowd and even going after the security team. Besides the show itself, the edition I'm bringing you has some cool extras, like the Outtake with Ice-T – "Don't Call Me Nigger". I'll leave the details in the download file. Curious and very entertaining. Into our bubbling pot we're going to throw another ingredient and let everything cook slowly, and what could be more seasoned for the Los Angeles die-hards than our most active Beatle since the breakup of the lads from Liverpool. Yes, friends, here's the

December 12, 2024 show at the WiZink Center in Madrid. The sound is almost perfect, a long and wonderful show that I'm sure you'll enjoy as much as I did. The classics, both from Wings and The Beatles, are eternal, they take us back to another era. I have to admit I'm not usually a big fan of concerts recorded with signal receivers because you lose some of the atmosphere if there isn't a source capturing the crowd, but in this recording that's made up for by the incredible clarity of all the instruments. Enjoy the magic.

And since we're talking about magic, what better example than the one that took me to Lisbon to see the band that in recent years has been twisting hard rock into something new. Yes, I'm talking about Ghost. On their 2025 tour, the Madrid show was canceled, so we had to travel to Portugal the day after the blackout. It was a tour with no electronic devices allowed for the audience. In Lisbon, for example, not only were we searched at the entrance, we were also put through a metal detector, so it was a bad idea to try to record anything for posterity. In other cities the checks were more relaxed and a Swedish friend managed to record it. The sound and the show are very good; it's a concert from May last year. The band is incendiary, you either love them or you hate them, they don't leave anyone indifferent. For me, one of the best shows of last year. Enjoy these two hours of high-quality rock. Like Pink Floyd's "The Wall", this tour was done without accredited press, so getting material from the tour or a full show has been very complicated. I know recordings exist from Paris, Amsterdam and some from the first leg of the U.S. tour, but not much else. The explosion of mobile phones in the front row has really hurt tapers in cases like this.

Only in a magazine as wonderful as this one is there room for a crazy mix like the one I've served up today. I hope you savor it as much as I did tracking down these rarities.

“If nobody’s talking about this, I’ll make my own magazine and talk about it myself”

By Óscar Avendaño

Toward the late ’80s, when I was just a kid beginning to take music more seriously than most of my classmates, the only way I could discover new bands and records, beyond swapping tapes with the occasional like-minded friend, was through magazines. The problem was that the titles available at the newsstand rarely covered the genres that mattered to me. Most of them revolved around heavy metal, and heavy metal simply wasn’t my thing.

I was into classic rock: Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Beatles, Lou Reed, The Rolling Stones. But also blues, soul, underground sounds, psychedelia, garage, the paisley underground, punk, and the whole Australian scene. And, pushing it even further, I was obsessed with that same kind of music being made in Spain. Bands like Los Negativos, Sex Museum or Los Contentos.

Very little of that showed up in the magazines I could get my hands on. Yes, there was Ruta 66, but not much else. For a while I hunted down old issues of “Vibraciones” at flea markets and secondhand shops, but that didn’t really solve the problem. Until one day a friend mentioned something I had never even heard of: fanzines.

These “fanzines”, as the name suggests, were magazines made by fans, about things nobody else bothered to cover. Articles about bands I had never heard, films I had never seen, pop art I barely understood at the time, perhaps even less than I do now. In short, content that only a handful of people cared about, and I happened to be one of that handful. Back then, the people publishing those homemade booklets felt like genuine heroes to me.

It didn’t take long, though, barely ten years, which at our age felt like an eternity, for everything to change. The democratization of the internet pushed those stapled, photocopied pages into history. In their place came blogs, their natural successors.

And now, in 2026, nearly three decades after the internet entered our lives, Javi Torreira asks me to write something for his… what should I call it? Fanzine? I asked him that very question not long ago, whether I could use the word. His answer: “Of course. It is one. Just digital.”

For me, that is the highest compliment you can pay to Rock Bottom Magazine. That it’s a fanzine. That it preserves that spirit of “If nobody’s talking about this, I’ll make my own magazine and talk about it myself”. That it still interviews obscure bands and gives space to even more obscure voices, see Exhibit A. Because he genuinely cares about what we have to say. That’s what fanzines do.

Did I mention that the people who published those things once seemed like heroes to me?



LA MANO ABIERTA con Sendoa Bilbao

Micah P. Hinson

"I've Sharpened My Knives and I'm Ready to Bring Fury to the World"



On a sharp winter morning, the kind where Madrid's light cuts clean lines across brick façades, we park along the narrow pavements of Carabanchel. Micah P. Hinson opens the door to his home, an electrically calm refuge where the Tennessee-born bard seems to have finally found his center of gravity. The Texas shipwreck years, prescription addictions, suicidal shadows, and a faith in music collapsing like a sun-bleached porch, are behind him. Today, alongside Colombian artist Lina Castellanos, he has rebuilt his emotional grammar. "She's the artist in this house," he says, seated on a red sofa, rolling tobacco with deliberate patience while photographer Ana Hortelano captures the mischief in his eyes beneath the brim of his hat and the austerity of his bow tie. In this measured atmosphere, he speaks about the pulse behind "The Tomorrow Man", his most expansive and commanding record to date, a rebirth set to arrive live in Madrid on June 19 at Sala Copérnico as part of the Sound Isidro series. I had prepared the usual endless list of questions. We abandoned it within minutes.

Micah, you've just completed the first leg of the tour. After the applause fades, is there satisfaction, or the anxiety that time is slipping away?

We finished the first leg, yeah. I spent my whole life trying to make a record like this, and I finally did. Then you play sixteen shows and think, what the hell are we doing? That's not enough. When you work on something for three years, or forty-four years, you want to live inside it. I need to be playing a hundred and fifty shows a year. I've been coming to Spain for twenty years, touring the whole damn country. When you've built something somewhere, you want to give more. A folk musician's role is to be with people. My label's focused on rebuilding my reputation. I messed around for a few years. But I love Spain. Hell, you're in my house. I live here.

Let's trace the map. Everything starts in Memphis, right?

It started there, but my compass was broken from day one. I passed through West Virginia's mountains and landed deep in Texas, the place that shaped me by force. I grew up in Abilene. Texas is a universe. I bounced city to city until Denton. That's where things got interesting. Austin markets itself as the live music capital, but most of it's filler. In Denton, authenticity hit you in the face. That's where I met Josh Pearson when I was a kid, with Lift to Experience, preaching Texas as the Promised

Land. It was otherworldly. But Texas got too small, or maybe I needed distance. I crossed the Atlantic, soaked in Manchester rain, hid in Roman ruins. I've been everywhere, leaving Texas dust across European asphalt. My story is constant flight that never quite lands.

Now you live in Carabanchel. How does it feel watching your homeland from here?
It's complicated. I'm proud to be Native American, Chickasaw. My people lived in Mississippi for ten thousand years. Beneath the modern state is the story of genocide. I'm glad I don't live in the US right now. What's happening, the detentions, disappearances, war crimes, it's real. I grew up hearing it was the land of freedom. Even here, part of me is careful with words. I'm anti-government, anti-fascist. My wife's Colombian, my friends are queer, trans, racialized. They're treated as enemies back home. It's a strange dichotomy. I leave America seeking difference, speak critically of it, yet the first foreigner my people met was Hernando de Soto in 1540. He crossed oceans with God and changed everything. It's a philosophical nightmare.

Why do you sing?
That's hard. I remember being eight or nine in Texas with a little Casio keyboard playing Disney songs. I'd sit on the porch wanting to move people. We listened to John Denver. I connected early to nostalgia and emotion. I asked my father to teach me guitar chords. I can't imagine life without writing songs. I don't want to sound like a damn hippie, but it called me. Twenty years after my first album, I see that the songs and I have aged together. I've helped people through dark moments. I don't think I have anything revolutionary to say. I just know how to describe what it feels like to be human, love, hate, sorrow, pain. I'm not good at anything else. Thank God I make music.

At the concert you mentioned that audiences love the old songs. How do you feel about them now?
People love the early stuff. For me, though, it's hard to sing it because I'm not a damn teenager anymore. I wrote "Beneath the Rose" when I was nineteen; some songs on that first record were written when I was fifteen. It feels like reading my diary out loud. A lot of people connected deeply with "The Gospel of Progress", but I feel far removed from that kid. This year marked the twentieth anniversary of that whole chapter.

Your voice is central to your music. Do you take care of it? Has your singing changed over time?
You can see my workout routine (he takes a long drag from his cigarette holder). I don't drink, but I smoke a lot. I probably shouldn't, but I do. I have a friend in Switzerland who's an opera singer, and we've started talking about proper exercises because I'm not young anymore. My voice feeds my family; I have to treat it like an instrument. Years ago my "practice" involved a ridiculous amount of drugs before stepping onstage. Thankfully, that's over. My addictions were complicated because everything was prescribed. Doctors would say, "You have a problem, this will help." That's a different kind of trap. But yes, my voice is something particular. People seem to respond to it.

What's your creative process? How do songs take shape here, in this room?
My wife accuses me of never working. From the outside, it looks like I do nothing. But it's all mental labor. Writing songs is me trying to solve my own psychological and philosophical mess, figuring out what the hell I'm doing and why I feel the way I do. Then I sit down with a guitar and something usually resonates. My process has changed a lot. I wrote "Beneath the Rose" in ten minutes. For years I felt stuck, like whatever came in twenty minutes was fixed and untouchable. I think I used to write ideas, not songs. Now I'm more deliberate. The last twenty years feel like rehearsal. I've been sharpening my knives. Now I'm ready to bring the fury.

You've said inspiration often comes from life's "small nonsense."
I mean the tiny, seemingly insignificant things. We're sitting here talking about colonialism, genocide, history. Then we talk about songs. Which matters more? For me, it's the songs. I'll be writing about heartbreak while the world burns. Compared to history's enormity, relationships look trivial. But love itself, that's different. Love is everything.

Is that shift in your creative process tied to geography?
Yes and no. Many songs evolved here, in Spain and Italy, but their first spark came in Texas. Only a few recent tracks were entirely written and recorded in Europe. I moved during the pandemic. I realized the people I'd chosen as family weren't good for me. I hit the reset button. It hurt. A lot of people were collateral damage. But in my previous life, I wasn't encouraged to make music or be myself. I was told to stay away from fans, not to take photos, to believe people wanted something bad from me. I had to walk away. It was painful, but now I'm a better father, a better husband, more optimistic.

> ***I'm anti-government and anti-fascist. My Native blood, my Colombian wife, my queer and trans friends, they're all considered enemies of the state I come from.***

Let's talk about "The Tomorrow Man". There's celebration, melancholy and hope intertwined.
I'm not sure it's celebration. The words are full of trauma. But there's a grain of hope now. Life can be miserable, yet hope is necessary.





Musically, we chose a different direction, orchestration, oboes, harps. The title is about becoming something new. Not only in relationships, but in how we treat the world. During the pandemic, we glimpsed clear skies. Then we rushed back to feeding AI systems that devour electricity and water. It feels like we're moving in the opposite direction. Instead of reflection, we're generating AI frogs. It's strange.

Was the pandemic the real catalyst for moving to Spain?

My arrival was chaotic. I left Milan as the outbreak began, went to Mallorca, then Madrid, and the virus followed me. Sometimes I joke that I was spreading it, but don't tell the government. I entered Spain because a Basque production company planned a documentary about my life. They secured special permission. Once I arrived, the project collapsed. But I was already here. I came from a Texas that believes it's untouchable, where God, the Bible and "freedom" supposedly shield you. While Europe locked down, Texas carried on. I was living that contradiction, working alone at night so I wouldn't risk infecting my father, who was undergoing chemotherapy, while watching friends in Europe endure confinement.

"Walls" talks about confinement and physical barriers, or is it more about the walls we build in communication and the need to look through the cracks, maybe even tear them down?

It's an interesting song. It started from a very selfish place, relationships and the walls we build to protect ourselves, which usually just make communication impossible. But the song drifted into political territory. When I first wrote it, the situation with Palestinians wasn't what it is now. Later, I began to see how brutal this world can be when it comes to immigration and literal walls. I don't understand nationalism or pride in a country. I'm wary of talking politics because it often feels pointless. We saw the pro-Palestinian marches in Madrid, millions of people, and then six weeks later… silence. It felt like a Nike commercial, loud for a moment, then gone. It's the fault of those in power pulling triggers, yes, but it's also on us for forgetting. We keep using Amazon, Facebook, Instagram, feeding cowardly billionaires. Pointing fingers is easy, but three fingers point back at you. "It's your fault… but wait, I shop at Carrefour, I buy Coca-Cola, I pay for Spotify." My label wanted me to promote my "Spotify Wrapped." I said, "Are you kidding me? You want me to advertise for megalomaniac thieves? Am I supposed to celebrate being robbed?" I'm in the process of pulling my music off as many streaming services as I can. It's capitalism, and capitalism always finds a way to screw everyone. The answer isn't giving billionaires

more money. We need some kind of revolution in our lives.

Is "Last Train to Texas" a farewell to the land where you were born?
Not at all. That title was just a passing phrase. The real story is messier. The song was originally called "O'Sylvia." Long before my first marriage, I had my heart split between a girlfriend in Rome named Silvia and another waiting in Texas. Like an idiot, I chose Texas, had children, and buried the song. Out of respect, or fear, I erased it. You can't sing about an Italian girl while sleeping in a Texan bed. But the day I signed the divorce papers, the first thing in my head was, "Damn, I can sing that song again." I'm proud of it. In another era, it would've been a real country hit, the kind Hank Williams or Johnny Cash would spit out. Modern country is commercial trash. This song is pure. Don't look for metaphors. It's just a sad guy missing a girl.

The sound of "The Tomorrow Man" is dramatic, almost like a carol sung by The Pogues.
For me it has a Disney quality. I wanted to go as far as "The Little Mermaid" or "Frozen." I love drama, but wrapped in orchestration, color, grandeur. There's something about melodrama and big orchestras that fascinates me. Maybe I was trying to be a hipster Disney princess. I love Juan Gabriel, one of the most dramatic performers ever. Listening to old Latin American music, Chavela Vargas, mariachi, it opened me up. It helped me stop listening only to Americans and hear the emotional heights southern artists can reach. It's deeply inspiring.

"Oh, Sleepyhead" is stunning. It opens and closes the record. Why?
That song, along with "Think of Me," is one of the most important I've written. There have always been two versions, acoustic and full band. When we hired the orchestra for this record, I thought it was the perfect way to close it. Same words, but the band version and the orchestral version carry different emotional weight.

"Think of Me" feels like the emotional core of the album. Did you really write it in minutes?
It's one of the most important songs of my life because every word quickly captured exactly how I felt: "Pray with me one more night, our gods will let us suffer when they're gone." I felt like a journalist chasing truth. I said precisely what needed to be said in a simple, powerful way. It represents what I want to do, speak clearly about my own experience but leave enough space for others to project theirs. I'm not the only one who's felt abandoned by God. When I wrote it, I still had my old life in Texas. I was seriously contemplating suicide, quitting music, even working at a Chickasaw Nation casino with my brother. I thought it was the end. But my producer, Asso Stefana, invited me to Italy. I had nothing left. He said, "Come here. Bring whatever songs you have and let's record." I went there thinking it was my final chapter. It turned out to be a beginning.

At Ponderosa Studios, where Ludovico Einaudi records, you first tracked "I Lie to You." Was that when you realized this wasn't the end?
Yes. I thought my career was fading, so I gathered those songs like a last will. They were pieces I'd always wanted to capture properly, like "What Does It Matter Now," a melody that haunted me since "The Gospel of Progress." I entered the studio intending to close a door. Instead, what I recorded as a farewell became a rebirth.

Was the label's name, Ponderosa, a sign?
Hell yes. I'm proud you know that reference. Ponderosa was the ranch in "Bonanza." I grew up watching that show with my grandfather in Texas. You can't be from Texas and not grow up with "Bonanza." When I heard the studio was called Ponderosa, I thought, "Damn, I know that place." It felt like a sign.

Tell me about your producer, Asso Stefana, who has also worked with Vinicio Capossela, Calexico and PJ Harvey.
Asso Stefana was a gift from the goddess. I think the universe saw I was suffering and thought, "Let's introduce these two." They say he's the seventh best guitarist in all of Italy, which amazes me because he never plays guitar for me.

Our story began about a decade ago at Sponz Fest, thanks to Vinicio Capossela. Vinicio asked me to come onstage and said, "This guy, Asso, will teach you the song." I was nervous. I knew his work with Mike Patton and I was a fan of Faith No More. I felt small. But the connection was instant.

> ***Austin sells itself as the music capital, but most of what you hear there is noise. Only a tiny fraction is worth your time.***

Later, when my career clearly needed momentum, Asso said, "Why don't you come?" He set up a makeshift studio in Vinicio's house in Calitri, and within those Italian walls we just started creating. He'd listen to my demos, catch fragments of what I said, and run with them. In many ways, he built the record before I even fully stepped into it, while I was still contemplating quitting music. He brought in people like Greg Cohen, who played bass for Tom Waits, and the incredible Zeno De Rossi on drums.

Beyond the technical side, he's been extraordinarily kind. He gave me space to record without worrying about money. He gave his time freely, and his compassion. I owe him a great deal. He's one of the very few people who made it possible for me to still be here. I plan to work with Asso for the rest of my life.

We just returned from Naples, where we recorded string arrangements for a Spanish film I wrote three songs for. They're damn good songs. When we finished orchestrating them, I remember thinking, I can't believe I'm handing these over to a movie.

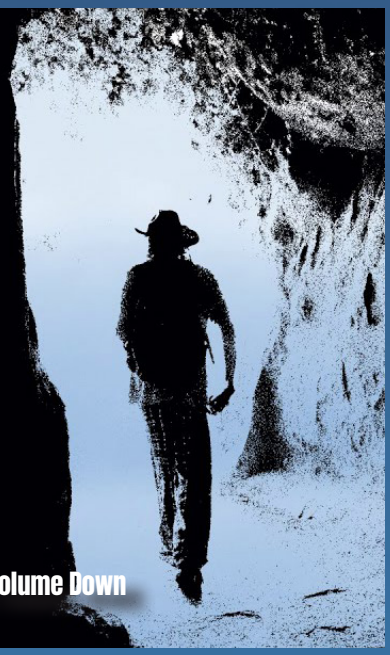
We also have a parallel project called Honey and Cigars, rooted in folk music. We're playing Elizabeth Cotten songs, but trying to push the concept beyond the stereotypical American with a country guitar. We're digging into South American and Italian folk traditions, trying to create something that might actually endure.





THE SAINTS

Carnivore (Long March Through the Jazz Age)



"Long March Through The Jazz Age": When Chris Bailey Says Goodbye Without Turning the Volume Down

There are records that arrive to stay. Records that appear when you no longer expect them and remind you why rock & roll is still necessary. "Long March Through the Jazz Age," the final album recorded by The Saints, is exactly that. The definitive closing chapter of an essential band and, at the same time, a statement of principles signed by Chris Bailey when he had nothing left to prove and everything left to say.

On April 9, four years will have passed since Bailey's death, and returning to this record feels almost like an act of justice. Not as a forced tribute, but as a confirmation. Because this album does not sound like a sad farewell or a carefully rescued posthumous relic. It sounds alive. It sounds big. It sounds like a musician who kept believing in songs until the very last moment.

Recorded in Sydney in 2018, "Long March Through the Jazz Age" is a broad, ambitious record, with production that allows the songs to breathe and unfold without haste. There are no urgencies here, no repeated formulas. The Saints' rock stretches without losing muscle, blends with soul, folk, and blues, and leans on brass and string arrangements that do not soften the impact but deepen it. It is an album for attentive listening, the kind that asks for time and gives it back generously.

Chris Bailey occupies everything, as always. Vocals, guitars, bass, keyboards. And, above all, that is unique to his way of singing. Never complacent, never ornamental. Bailey sings like someone who has lived, who has lost, who has seen personal and collective empires fall, and who still chooses music as a form of resistance. There is no exaggerated drama, but there is a clear awareness of time passing, of wear and tear, and of the need to move forward without renouncing one's own identity.

Around him, a band that perfectly understands what this record represents. Sean Carey is key to sonic architecture. Guitars, banjo, mellotron, and a mix that keeps everything organic, without over-polishing or chasing artificial shine. Pete Wilkinson, a longtime companion, anchors the songs from the drums with elegance, craft, and restraint. Davey Lane brings electricity and edge, pushing when necessary, reminding us that rock is still a matter of energy.

The keyboards of Shannon Stitt and Andy Judd add layers and atmospheres that enrich the songs without overloading them, while the brass and string arrangements—Danny Carmichael and Simon Ferenci on horns, Clare Kahn on cello, and Vanessa Tammetta on violin—expand the emotional spectrum of the album without turning it into something solemn. Everything serves the songs, never the other way around.

The lyrics speak of love, faith put to the test, memory, resistance, and the contradictions that come with the years. There are no slogans or closed messages. Bailey was always better at posing questions than offering answers. There are lines that linger, images that land softly and end up hurting more than an obvious chorus. It is a record that does not shout, but neither does it whisper; it speaks clearly, with the voice of someone who no longer needs to raise his hand to be heard.

For me, "Long March Through the Jazz Age" matters because it confirms something that is sometimes forgotten. The Saints were never just a seminal punk band. They were a group capable of growing, mutating, and remaining faithful to a very specific idea of artistic integrity. Especially because after The Saints' breakup, Bailey kept the name and gave meaning to the changes. It became a deeply personal project. This album does not look back with nostalgia or attempt to rewrite the past. It moves forward. It walks slowly, but with a steady step, aware of every stride it takes.

This may be Chris Bailey's final record, but it does not sound like an ending. It sounds like someone leaving having said everything he needed to say, without turning the volume down, without asking permission, and without betraying himself. In rock & roll, that is as close to immortality as it gets.

There could not have been a better way to say goodbye.

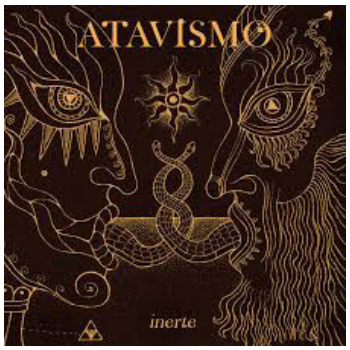

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50 RECORDS...
...That Define 50 Issues



If you're human, fifty is a curious number. It's the moment when you stop feeling like all your time lies ahead of you and start sensing it behind you. That might sound bleak, but it isn't. Reaching fifty, in anything, is a gift. Fifty issues filled with books, adventures, setbacks and, above all, records. Because what drives Rock Bottom Magazine is music, rock, soul, jazz... it's all there. And what better way to honor that music that has accompanied us than by choosing fifty albums we've found relevant along the way, a journey that is far from over. Was it necessary? Not at all. But as Javier Sanabria said when I proposed it, "It sounds very Rock Bottom".

"Inerte", Atavismo



The very first text in the history of Rock Bottom Magazine was dedicated to this Cádiz-based band, so it felt only right to begin the list with them. Atavismo are one of those gifts to the ears that, unfortunately, too few people experience, for lack of exposure or who knows why. Rising from the ashes of Viaje a 800, this power trio, Pot on guitar and vocals, Pow on drums, Matt on bass, delivered one of the jewels of Andalusian and Spanish rock in the past decade. On "Inerte", their second album, they expanded on what they had shown on their debut: hypnotic guitars, trippy psychedelia and that salty taste left by blood on your gums after a punch. A band destined for cult status, and an album that, had it been released in 1969, would now be labeled a classic.

Marcos Sánchez

"To Bring You My Love", PJ Harvey

What can be said about "To Bring You My Love"? PJ Harvey in a state of grace that, in my opinion, she never quite reached again, even as her acclaim and visibility grew. In issue 16,



May 2020, just before COVID reached every corner of the planet, I was finally able to pay my debt to an album that had gripped me since 1994. Alongside John Parish and beginning her collaboration with Flood, known for work with U2 and Depeche Mode, Polly Jean

embarked on a journey blending twisted blues, voodoo and chaotic imagery. These songs feel less like songs and more like spells. Tracks such as “To Bring You My Love”, “C’mon Billy” and the hypnotic “Down by the Water” make it indispensable. It culminated in that mythical Glastonbury performance, a pink leather-clad sorceress at full power.

Javistone

“Devastación”, Bourbon



The second album from the Sanlúcar band raised questions after shrinking from four members to three. Those doubts vanished the moment Raúl’s voice soared over the opening of “¿Quién eres tú?”. If we compiled a list of the best albums of the last decade, this would occupy a prime position. An album filled with atmosphere, riffs capable of leveling buildings, and psychedelic vapors born under the Guadalquivir sun. Tracks like the title cut “Devastación”, “Contra el Cristal” and “Te Esperaré” have become timeless anthems. Hence their deserved cover feature in issue 8, January 2019, with photographs by Ester García.

Marcos Sánchez

“Above”, Mad Season



As with PJ Harvey’s record, it was only fair to pay tribute to one of the albums of my life. A journey steeped in contained pain yet marked by extraordinary beauty, musicians in a state of grace guided purely by love of art and music. In January 2021 I immersed myself again in “Above”, an album that saved me countless times. Listening to it, you share the pain, and shared pain feels lighter. Dedicating the cover to Layne Staley’s unsettling painting on the album’s 25th anniversary gave meaning to what we do. From the hypnotic “Wake Up”, to “River of Deceit”, to “Long Gone Day” with the voice of Mark Lanegan intertwined with Staley’s, Barrett Martin’s percussion, Mike McCready’s guitar, “Above” stands as one of humanity’s great works. Timeless.

Javistone

“Blind Melon”, Blind Melon



Two months earlier, in issue 19, November 2020, Shannon Hoon graced our cover just before his legendary Woodstock ’94 performance. There’s never a need for an excuse to write about Blind Melon, but at the time a documentary about Hoon was about to premiere, though it proved disappointing. It was the right moment to celebrate them properly. I devoted nearly ten pages to them, including a generous interview with guitarist Christopher Thorn, now working with Greg Dulli in The Afghan Whigs. Both albums recorded with Hoon are essential, but if forced to choose, I’d pick the debut. “Change”, “Tones of Home”, “Holyman”, “Time” left too deep a mark to ignore. A fundamental band, an essential record.

Javistone

“Le Demon de L’amour”, The Neptune Power Federation



It was Javistone who introduced me to this Australian band whose aesthetic would make Ghost blush. Musically they roam between ’70s hard rock, psychedelia, stoner and irreverent garage. “Le Demon…” was their fourth album, released as we were beginning to see light after the pandemic. Demonic riffs, synths, twin guitars, satanic imagery, corrosive humor and the attitude to invade a country. If you like Lucifer, Kadavar, Wucan or Psychedelic Witchcraft, don’t hesitate. They graced our issue 33 cover in March 2023, with Imperial Screaming Loz Sutch reigning supreme.

Marcos Sánchez

“Rattle & Hum”, U2

Another indispensable album in my life. At thirteen, I spent birthday money on a compilation by The Housemartins and “Rattle & Hum”. If “The Joshua Tree” had placed



the world at their feet, this one captured me completely. If you already felt drawn to Black music, blues, soul, knew who Billie Holiday was, knew about Sun Records, this album was inevitable. It may seem fragmented, mixing live recordings, covers and collaborations with giants like B.B. King and Bob Dylan, but its energy is undeniable. From Bono’s introduction of “Helter Skelter” to songs like “Desire”, “Angel of Harlem”, “God Part II”, “Love Rescue Me”, “When Love Comes to Town”. How I regret not giving “Rattle & Hum” the cover it deserved. Blessed be you, damn Bono.

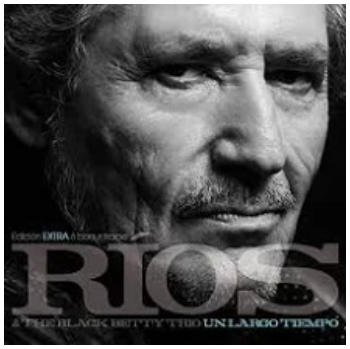
Javistone

“The Kinks Are The Village Green Preservation Society”, The Kinks



In the very same issue that featured my article on “Rattle & Hum”, November 2018, The Kinks occupied the coveted cover spot. Their celebrated “The Kinks Are The Village Green Preservation Society” was turning fifty, and Jesús Sánchez, a devoted admirer of the Davies brothers, wanted to give it the tribute it unquestionably deserved. It can be regarded as one of the great works of 1960s British rock, an atypical concept album that, far removed from “sex, drugs and urban rebellion”, celebrates rural life, memory, tradition and English identity. Released in 1968 and poorly received commercially, it has since been reappraised as an essential grower, influential and musically and lyrically coherent. The record marks a turning point in the band’s career and in Ray Davies’ artistic development, as he uses characters, landscapes and situations to explore childhood, nostalgia and the tension between modernity and tradition. Musically diverse and literarily rich, it blends pop, rock, folk and vaudeville into small vignettes that deepen with every listen. Five decades later, reissues, exhibitions and critical reassessments confirm its status as a summit of British rock and a privileged gateway into the creative universe of a singular band.

Javistone



“Un largo tiempo”, Miguel Ríos

That in 2021 Miguel Ríos would leave us open-mouthed was something none of us were prepared for. Having supposedly retired from the stage, he found that performing with The Black Betty Trío led to songs of sufficient caliber to warrant a new album. As Miguel himself told us in the first of the two interviews we’ve conducted with him so far, “We had good songs, and in this business that means hitting the road”. And so he did, embarking on a memorable trio-format tour.

The album was a joy. Ríos in full voice, charisma and energy on songs like “Memphis-Granada”, “El blues de la tercera edad” and “A contra ley”, but also intense on jewels like “Que salgan los Clowns”. An essential record, a more than deserved cover (with Eddie 9V on the back cover), accompanied by a wonderful interview in which Ríos radiated happiness at presenting such compelling new material. Ester García’s outstanding photo report from his show in El Puerto de Santa María completed the feature, alongside a brief text by Jesús Sánchez on Miguel’s importance, following his recent appearance again in issue 49.

Javistone

“Trouble in Time”, Zålomon Grass



Last year the Galicians delivered one of the most notable records on the national rock scene. Their seventies-influenced hard rock, with progressive touches and blues inflections, may not reinvent the wheel, but it raises the genre to a rarely achieved level of quality in these parts. These seasoned musicians, also involved in The Soul Jacket, Los Naipes and Spoonful, confirmed on their second album everything they had already shown on “Space Opera” (2023). They are one of the country’s most solid bands, not only on record but live, where they are highly recommended. This is not imitation; the Vigo-based group absorbs its influences and reshapes them into something distinctly their own. If you appreciate Led Zeppelin, Rush or Blackfoot, you should not wait a minute to listen. Well-deserved back cover in issue 46, May 2025.

Marcos Sánchez

“The Devil Can’t Do You No Harm”, Mike Edison & Guadalupe Plata



Guadalupe Plata appeared on the cover of issue 9 in March 2019. At that time the then-trio were touring their 2018 album. But in July 2023 they joined forces with Mike Edison, whose background includes figures like GG Allin and The Pleasure Fuckers, releasing one of the finest records we have covered. Pedro de Dios welcomed the chance to relinquish lead vocals to Edison, whose gravelly voice deepens Guadalupe Plata’s swampy and somber atmosphere, recalling the darker side of Tom Waits. A majestic work and a fascinating conversation with Mike and Pedro.

Javistone

“Moura”, Moura



Given that this magazine is produced in Cádiz, affinity with Spinda Records is unsurprising. But here the connection stretches over a thousand kilometers northeast to Galicia. Forget clichés of bagpipes and drizzle: Moura debuted in issue 29, July 2022, with a sonic blow smelling of damp forest, covens, meigas and druids. Guitars, synthesizers and vocals in Galician articulate an ancestral spell. Each track feels ritualistic; “Eira”, nearly ten minutes of progressive trance, dissolves time itself. Tradition is present, but not nostalgia. Folklore is shaken and expanded; the modern and the ancestral form part of the same howl. Not an easy album, it demands commitment, yet rewards with electricity in a realm where time ceases to matter. Galicia has rarely sounded so arcane or so dangerous.

Javier Sanabria



“Little Black Flies”, Eddie 9V

Back cover of issue 24, September 2021, another album that provided oxygen during pandemic restrictions and curfews. Although his second release, it was my introduction to this Atlanta musician, whose blend of neo-soul, rhythm and blues and touches of rockabilly produced, in my opinion, his finest work to date. A dozen songs transporting you straight to Beale Street in Memphis on a hot summer afternoon, dancing to Eddie’s raspy voice, brass that lifts you off your feet, and production that balances vintage character with provocative modernity. A great record.

Marcos Sánchez

“Maleza”, Bala



In 2021 the Galician duo Bala emerged as one of the national scene’s major surprises. With “Maleza” they consolidated their sonic and emotional identity, moving between punk, stoner and nineties influences without losing visceral force. Cover of issue 23, Javier Sanabria spoke with Violeta and Anxela about their sound, an explosion of raw noise built from guitar, drums and overwhelming attitude. Recorded before the pandemic but released after a long wait, the album connects organically with a period marked by uncertainty, combining aggression, swagger and a hint of hope. Bala favor a direct, organic process without overproduction, faithful to their live energy, while allowing occasional collaborations to reinforce weight and depth. The record grows like the weeds it references: resilient, wild and luminous after devastation, closing with a clear message of survival and optimism. Their 2022 Azkena performance was wild.

Javistone

“Riverboy”, Riverboy

Charly Riverboy, what a guy! Vocalist and guitarist of The Milkyway Express, he released his self-titled debut in 2019. An absolutely magical work, steeped in British 1960s psychedelia. In issue 10 he mentioned Pete



Dello and “Into Your Ears,” which was enough to win us over. He spoke of spirituality and the ethereal qualities evoked by psychedelia, and “Riverboy” indeed sounds profound. From “A Riddle in a Pocket” you drift into his reverie. The organs in “Golden Flash of Light” elevate you; “Lightning Horse” evokes the West Coast with a near-Morrissey feel; “Dragonfly’s Yard” offers more warm and exhilarating moments. The closing “Pati” is a small folk gem dedicated to his partner. In 2022 he released another formidable album, “El Olimpo,” featured on the cover of issue 26. Though that record, sung in Spanish, took a more dreamlike direction, we remain especially attached to his debut. An absolute masterpiece. Ask Nacho Sarria.

Javistone

“Burbuja cómoda y elefante inesperado”, Anni B. Sweet & Los Estanques



There are albums that are born as experiments that make you raise an eyebrow and end up becoming a necessity. “Burbuja cómoda y elefante inesperado” is exactly that: an unlikely encounter that, instead of sounding like a fleeting whim, works as a creative collision. Los Estanques, with their surgically precise progressive psychedelic pop, and Anni B. Sweet with her emotionally disarming voice, build here a curious artifact that plays at being light while hiding a conceptual edge far sharper than it first appears. What fascinates is how two apparently opposite worlds coexist: the Cantabrian band’s instrumental exuberance, heir to baroque pop and seventies prog, and Anni’s luminous fragility, turning every phrase into either a confessional whisper or an existentialist roar. The record, I won’t deny it, sounds capricious, unfolding like a strange film full of melodic twists, lyrics that dodge the obvious, and arrangements that seem playful until you realize nothing is truly innocent. There is irony, understated critique, and a lucid gaze at contemporary discomfort, even if wrapped in fluorescent melodies. Songs like “He bebido tanto que estoy muerto de sed” and “Brillabas” make it clear this is not about showing off as musicians, though their talent overflows, but about constructing a shared language where both universes amplify one another. Los Estanques provide the sonic architecture; Anni supplies the emotional vulnerability that cuts through everything. The result is a risky, unclassifiable album in a scene that often confuses elegance with kitsch. There was a clear will here not to sound like anyone else. And in these damn times of algorithms and formulas, that is almost revolutionary. A shame it remained a one-off attempt, we wanted more.

Javier Sanabria

“Sweet Oblivion”, The Screaming Trees



There are interviews one never forgets. One that Torreira and I certainly won’t was the one we did with Gary Lee Conner (issue 39). The man, all hundred-plus kilos of him, was vulnerable and sincere in a way we did not expect, and he did it from his car, seatbelt on, for an hour. A damn hour. In the official narrative of grunge the same names are repeated, as if history had been written by those who sold the most T-shirts at H&M, but amid all the noise “Sweet Oblivion” still shines as an anomaly: an album that did not set out to be a generational anthem and ended up becoming one. Without fuss, without drama. And without a clear single, since “Nearly Lost You” appeared on the “Singles” soundtrack, preventing the album from selling what it deserved. A record where seventies hard rock seeps into psychedelia, where Conner unleashes a storm of distortion and, at the center of it all, Mark Lanegan’s voice breaks us with a cavernous lament that drags us into his world with an honesty that is both unsettling and seductive. “Nearly Lost You” was the gateway for many, but the real poison lies in the folds: “Dollar Bill”, “Shadow of the Season” or “Winter Song” draw a twilight landscape where beauty coexists with urgency. With “Dust” they would reach a glory only a few were able to see, but “Sweet Oblivion” will always be their most enduring whisper.

Javier Sanabria

“Blues Funeral”, Mark Lanegan

Mark Lanegan is one of those figures who mark the soul of those who have approached his music, approaching him physically might not have been so healthy at certain stages of his life. His departure was a truly hard blow for many of us, how he is missed. Throughout these fifty issues the presence of the singer born in Ellensburg has been constant. So



much so that in the very first issue, with Eric Oblander of Five Horse Johnson on the cover, I devoted several pages to the figure who was then my great idol, alive, that is. An article attempting to trace his path from joining the Conner brothers but especially delving into his solo career, which began in 1990 with “The Winding Sheet”, a debut that surprised with its emotional nakedness, revealing, perhaps even to himself, a musician of far greater depth than the “simple” singer of the Trees. A record which, as we would later discover in his harrowing autobiography “Sing Backwards and Weep”, he actually recorded to make some money to finance his excessive addictions. So much so that neither this nor the chilling “Whiskey for the Holy Ghost” were ever presented live. It was not until he had largely recovered, thanks to close friends, Josh Homme being crucial in this story, that he recorded “Scraps at Midnight” and truly began his solo career. From then on it ascended: works like “I’ll Take Care of You”, his collaborations with Queens of the Stone Age, Isobel Campbell, PJ Harvey or Greg Dulli, along with his surprising stylistic evolution toward more modern sounds beginning with “Bubblegum” (2004), turned Mark Lanegan into a legend. Yet for me his crowning achievement arrived in 2012 with “Blues Funeral”, undoubtedly his finest work, even if his first four albums are essential in my life. In “Blues Funeral” Lanegan synthesizes all his facets with outstanding songs: the dark crooner with the cavernous voice, synthesizers that do not diminish the emotion of the compositions. “The Gravedigger’s Song” freezes the blood; “Ode to Sad Disco” gets under your skin; “St. Louis Elegy”, “Harborview Hospital”. A masterpiece whose enormous artistic value even Gary Lee Conner acknowledged in the interview Javier Sanabria and I conducted with him.

Javistone

“Magnolia”, The Screamin’ Cheetah Wheelies

In 2023 something happened we did not expect. Mike Farris had said that bringing the Wheelies back to life was not among his priorities; his solo career is going very well and he had always spoken of his days in the band as a dark time. So seeing them revisit the incredible songs from their two albums was a wonderful gift. The first record is great, but “Magnolia” is one of those albums that seem written from a half-broken heart that is still beating. Released in the hangover of grunge, Screamin’ Cheetah Wheelies chose a different path, closer to what the Black Crowes were



doing before things became embarrassing, or to Blues Traveler: less generational pose and more southern rock, greasy soul and sixties spirit slipping through the cracks. In a context dominated by existential angst, the Memphis band offered something more organic and visceral. Mike Farris' voice is pure spiritual rawness, an unlikely cross between Otis Redding and Steve Marriott, he told us no, but yes, Mike, Marriott is there, capable of moving from wounded whisper to gospel roar. A voice that crushes you. The album breathes class: "Hello From Venus", "Right Place Wrong Time" or "Magnolia" immerse us in a southern road movie, with exquisite elegance and, I like to think, a redemptive halo that was not redemption at all but buried desperation: that of a band on the verge of exploding. "Magnolia" did not change the course of rock nor headline covers, but that is precisely what makes it a well-kept secret you enjoy boasting about.

Javier Sanabria

"Dandelions", Black Toska



Across fifty issues of Rock Bottom Magazine, Black Toska has established itself as one of those projects that leave a mark not only because of the quality of their work but because of the almost militant coherence of their artistic approach. In some way, the Madrid band and Rock Bottom Magazine have felt a kind of spiritual kinship, not born of chance but from something deeper within both projects and, why not say it, from the need of their leading figures to express themselves, seeing in one the reflection of the other. Since their 2018 debut "No Songs for a Father's Death", with Víctor García as its visible and thinking head, the band presented itself as a dark, suffocating and deeply personal entity, where swampy blues served as a starting point for something more complex: a language of their own in which songs rule and egos dissolve in service of the concept. Black Toska has never been a premeditated project, and that lack of calculation is one of its greatest virtues. Songs arise from a jam, from a moment, from "if it works, it stays", with an immediacy that rejects perfectionism in favor of emotional truth. Brief, intense pieces that do not draw but stain, and in that stain find shape, meaning and depth. Echoes of Nick Cave, Guadalupe Plata or the most visceral blues appear naturally filtered, always subordinate to a crushing personality that places Black Toska outside trends and labels. That path, marked by lineup changes, constant adaptation and a clearly underground ethic, finds in "Dandelions" a key reference point. The album sounds more organic, more nuanced, less sharp at the edges, yet equally dark and forceful. Voices integrate as another instrument, textures gain weight and production broadens the sonic spectrum without diluting the essence. In 2024 they would release "The Orphean", another journey from the shadows in Víctor's path, but we chose "Dandelions" because, beyond the in-depth interview we conducted with him in issue 31, it represents Black Toska, summarizing their way of understanding art: absolute fidelity to concept, emotional honesty and a conscious renunciation of individual protagonism in favor of the song. A work that does not seek immediate impact but permanence, resonance and real connection with those willing to listen. In that territory, Black Toska has not only left its mark on Rock Bottom Magazine; it has built a universe of its own to which one always wants to return, even knowing no one comes back exactly the same.

Javistone

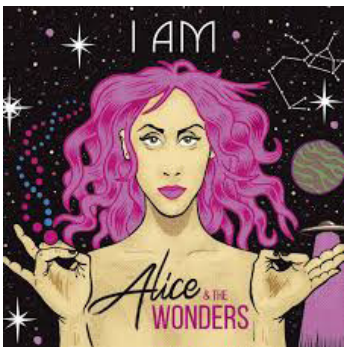
"Santa Leone", Pájaro



Pájaro… what a guy. Possibly the musician with whom we have connected most throughout these fifty issues. In 2012 he released "Santa Leone" and it blew our minds. What an album. Once we were already underway, in July 2018, in our fifth issue, we decided to give him a well-deserved cover after Andrés released his second record, the equally fascinating "El Gran Poder". With the release as an excuse we contacted him and since then he has not left our lives. The interview was wonderful; I discovered one of the most authentic and fascinating people I have ever met. His life deserves a film, but we settle for the book Alfred Crespo wrote in 2023, which we reviewed alongside a great conversation with Andrés and Alfred. Since I met him, Andrés not only began a small but great friendship but also became a contributor to Rock Bottom with his section "A vista de Pájaro". Whenever we have seen him live he has shown tremendous affection, even dedicating songs to us from the stage on two occasions. We chose "Santa Leone" as we could have chosen any of his records. The title track is an instrumental jewel that would make Ry Cooder blush; "Perché", "TLP" or "Palo Santo" with Raimundo Amador make this album monumental. A great one, Andrés. Andiamo!

Javistone

"I Am", Alice & The Wonders



In May 2023, issue 34, we spoke with Alejandra Rueda about "I Am", the second album by Alice & The Wonders, one of those works that settles at home, my daughters still keep it close at hand because they play it often, and in your head from the first listen. Addictive, elegant and rhythmic, the album confirms a notable leap forward from their debut "At My Door". If that record moved comfortably between swing and rockabilly, here the range opens naturally toward soul, rhythm & blues, bolero or New Orleans aromas, it was inevitable that the series "Treme" came up in conversation, without losing coherence or personality. The album revolves around Alejandra's voice, powerful and warm in equal measure, supported by a band that has grown and solidified over time. Self-produced and recorded with complete freedom, "I Am" sounds like a mature work, confident, where each song seems to find its place without forcing anything. From the clearly soul-driven opening "Damn Gory Honey" to the contagious swagger of "I'm Not Impressed" or the intensity of "Don't You Dare", the album flows with overwhelming ease. "I Am" is not only an artistic reaffirmation; it is also a statement of intent. An honest, vibrant and emotional record that confirmed Alice & The Wonders as one of the most stimulating proposals on the national scene, and which, with time, has gained ground and even surpassed artists who had greater visibility in the magazine.

Javistone

"A primera sangre", José Ignacio Lapido

José Ignacio Lapido may well be the musician who has appeared most often in the pages of this magazine across these fifty issues. I am not going to start counting, but I would bet my dobro that he is. So much so that he was already on the cover in issue 2, 1,376 downloads, mind you. It was 2018 and he was releasing "El alma dormida", but with every record the Granada musician put out, we were there, attentive to what he was giving us, because his songs are precisely that, gifts. And as in the case of Mark



Lanegan, who appears on this list solo and with his band, José Ignacio also appeared in the name of the legendary Granada band that surprised everyone by rising from the dead like Lazarus, selling out everywhere, this time even to their own surprise. Lapido can boast a consolidated and formidable discography. Albums like “Cartografía” or “De sombras y sueños” are timeless jewels where his mastery in chiseling songs is more than evident. Yet, incredible as it may seem at this point with so much excellent work behind him, in 2023 he had in store what is, for me, his finest record. “A primera sangre” is a culminating work by a musician in a state of grace. No one will convince me otherwise when I say that songs like “Curados de espanto”, “Malos pensamientos”, “Creo que me he perdido algo” or “Arrasando” rank among his most brilliant compositions, and that is saying a lot. His lyrics remain masterful, play any track and the ease with which this man writes is almost chilling, listen to “Uno y lo contrario” and try to argue the opposite. I do not know how much of Raúl Bernal’s hand is present in the production, but together with Lapido they turned “A primera sangre” into a radiant, fresh and brilliant work, proof that despite the years the talent of my admired Granada musician remains intact. And may it remain so for many more years.

Javistone

“Free”, Free

Free is another of those bands that are special to me. In September 2020, issue 18, I had the pleasure of dedicating nine pages to them, trying to tell their story as one of those bands that seem to have been left behind by time, beyond “All Right Now”, despite being fundamental. A collection of indispensable albums in which “Tons of Sobs” (1968), “Free” (1969) and “Fire and Water” (1970) form an unbeatable blues rock trilogy, from which I choose “Free”, though I could just as easily have chosen any of them. Songs like “I’ll Be Creepin’”, “Songs of Yesterday” or “Woman” make “Free” a fiery and essential record for any rock fan. The article traces their beginnings, from the almost accidental genesis of “All Right Now” after a failed concert, to the slow implosion of the group marked by creative tensions, egos and addictions. It attempts to analyze their albums not only musically but also in their historical and human context, highlighting simplicity as virtue and emotional power as identity, underlining Andy Fraser’s decisive role as a precocious composer, Paul Rodgers’ monumental voice and Paul Kossoff’s fragile talent, the true tragic heart of the group. Rodgers himself recently stated that if he had to choose a favorite guitarist, it would be Paul Kossoff, his first love. More than a biography, the article is a vindication: Free were not a one-hit band, but an essential link without which Led Zeppelin, Bad Company or much of the later rock and hard rock scene cannot be fully understood. A piece that inevitably invites you to listen again.



Javistone

“A Nod Is as Good as a Wink... to a Blind Horse”, The Faces



Another fundamental band for me. In truth, all the bands that emerged from the original Small Faces, The Faces and Humble Pie, are indispensable in my record collection. As with Free, here I try to pay tribute not only to a band but to an era when Rod Stewart’s career and that of The Faces intertwined, creating a formidable conjunction of songs, albums and tours. From the moment Steve Marriott left the Small Faces to when Ronnie Lane departed The Faces, in this same issue I interview Javier Cosmen about his biography of Ronnie Lane, the article attempts to organize that period when Rod released, in my opinion, his finest records, while The Faces delivered an absolutely wonderful discography. I chose “A Nod Is as Good as a Wink... to a Blind Horse” simply because it was the first one I bought, at the Rock and Roll Circus shop behind Callao, and because it contains their most famous song, “Stay With Me”, a track anyone would kill to have written, though today I doubt such a misogynistic lyric would be publishable. Highly recommended article in issue 12 and a fundamental record in the history of rock and roll.

Javistone

“Exile on Main Street”, The Rolling Stones

There are albums that sound, and others that perspire. “Exile on Main St”. belongs to the



latter: a masterpiece defined by dust, sweat, bourbon and sin, where the Rolling Stones stopped being merely the most dangerous band on the planet and became something greater, the state of mind of a generation. Recorded in fiscal and emotional exile, in the damp basements of Nellcôte, the album captures the Stones between collapse and lucidity. Nothing was polished here; some songs sound as if recorded wearing the same clothes for three days. It is Keith Richards’ record, acting as a disheveled shaman holding the building together through blues, while Mick Jagger snakes through gospel, soul and rock and roll with the swagger of someone who knows history is being written. “Rocks Off”, “Tumbling Dice”, “Happy” or “Shine a Light” do not chase perfection but truth, and they find it. “Exile on Main St”. is chaotic, excessive and at times almost overwhelming, yet that is precisely its greatness. It sounds like a band playing together, like crossed wires and the sense that everything could collapse at any moment. The Stones embrace American tradition, blues, country, gospel, and return it dirtier, more dangerous and entirely their own. That is where the magic of this exile lies. Not only their crowning achievement, but proof that rock and roll, when it leaps without a safety net, can be messy, human and eternal.

Javier Sanabria

“Impera”, Ghost



Throughout fifty issues of Rock Bottom Magazine, Ghost, largely thanks to Jesús Sánchez, have consolidated themselves as more than a recurring band. They represent tangible proof that twenty-first-century rock can still generate excitement, identity and generational renewal without renouncing tradition. Ghost have restored the value of the total concept: solid songs, powerful iconography and a narrative that transcends the stage. From their first appearances in the magazine, they embodied the lesson

learned from Alice Cooper, KISS or Iron Maiden: the music matters, but so does the packaging. Under Tobias Forge's creative leadership, interviewed by Jessica Jacobsen in issue 29, the project has combined hard rock, metal, pop, psychedelia and prog with meticulous theatricality, turning each tour into a generational ritual. Not gratuitous shock, but a coherent staging aligned with an increasingly transversal and multigenerational catalogue. In Rock Bottom we have documented their growth from underground act to arena band, emphasizing one constant idea: Ghost invent nothing, but assemble everything with intelligence, ambition and craft. The album chosen to represent them is "Impera", a work that synthesizes their creative maturity: ambitious production, stadium-sized melodies and a conceptual background addressing the rise and fall of empires. "Impera" confirms Ghost as a band fully aware of their place and their time. For us, they symbolize that rock is not dead; it simply needed to believe in itself again as spectacle, idea and collective experience.

Javistone

"Musseexum", Sex Museum



In issue 39, released on February 29, 2024, I had the immense pleasure and honor, as a diehard fan, of preparing a special Sex Museum feature, along with an interview with guitarist and founding member Fernando Pardo. They also took the cover. Among their fifteen or sixteen albums it is difficult for me to choose one, as most are nearly unquestionable to me, but I selected "Musseexum" (2018) because it was a punch in the face after the misunderstood "Big City Lies" (2014), and because most of its material still fuels their incendiary live shows. Volcanic, almost space rock compositions like "Horizons", "Lucky Man", "Plumed Serpent", "Shine", "Riots", "Breaking the Robot", and their version of Dead Moon's "Walking On My Grave", make it a huge record by a huge band.

J.L. Crespo, "ZepiSoul"

"Miranda and The Beat", Miranda and The Beat

One of the few things we can claim at Rock Bottom Magazine is that we like to dive into the underground, because there you find genuine jewels that keep faith alive in rock and roll and its eternal youth. Miranda and The Beat are a clear example. Their debut proves that rock can still sound exciting, sexy and sweaty. Songs as sticky and smoky as "Sweat", sixties echoes in "Out of My Head", punk bursts and even



touches of bubblegum pop make the album a gem that led us to interview them and give them the back cover of issue 39. The interview with Miranda confirmed the sensations transmitted by their incendiary debut: a band that understands rock as a physical, emotional and above all visceral exercise. There are clear references, soul, punk, garage, sixties girl groups, but never forced retro. Everything is crossed by contemporary, raw energy. Their explosive debut was followed by "Can't Take It", which did not quite reach the same level, yet we still hold high hopes for Miranda and her band.

Javistone

"Wild & Precious Life", Duane Betts



The son of legendary Allman Brothers guitarist Dickey Betts appeared in Rock Bottom Magazine in issue 39 with one of the most beautiful records we have enjoyed in recent years. When ElDiario.es asked me for a list of the best albums of the last twenty-five years, I included "Wild & Precious Life". Duane Betts, named after Duane Allman, had spent a lifetime breathing music before feeling the need to sign a truly personal record. That impulse crystallized in "Wild & Precious Life", a work that confirms his artistic maturity and stands as a worthy heir to the Allman Brothers legacy. Far from limiting himself to inheritance, Betts delivers a deeply vital album marked by personal redemption, awareness of fragility and an honest celebration of being alive. Songs like "Evergreen", "Forrest Lane", "Colors Fade" or "Stare at the Sun" feel more like hymns to life than simple tracks. The Allman spirit is present, inevitably, but filtered through a sincere and contemporary voice. Recorded organically and supported by top-level collaborators, "Wild & Precious Life" conveys truth, beauty and continuity, proof that the legacy is not only alive but still has much to say.

Javistone



"So Long", Schizophrenic Spacers

If there is, I refuse to speak of them in the past, a band worth fighting for in this country, it is undoubtedly this one. I remember clearly what I felt when I read on their social media that "So Long" would be their last record, for now, I still refuse to accept it, that mixture of rage, helplessness, sadness and deep empathy. I spoke about it at the time with Sergio Martos, their singer and one of the definitive frontmen in Spanish rock and roll, although his explanations did little to ease that anger. The Spacers said goodbye the only way they could, with a collection of songs that spit honesty straight in your face. A compendium of classic rock and pure adrenaline, though tinged with melancholy and bitterness, effectively announcing that farewell which, three years later, I still refuse to assume.

Marcos Sánchez

"Third Eye", Redd Kross



Redd Kross are one of the most beloved bands in Rock Bottom Magazine. Back in issue 3, March 2017, Steven McDonald was already on the cover, captured mid-jump at a concert with The Melvins, an image we even turned into a limited-run T-shirt logo. The full interview came later, Javier Sanabria and I again speaking with the ever-endearing bassist in issue 40, May 2024, a triple-cover issue, on the occasion of the documentary "Born Innocent, The Story of Redd Kross" and the band's return to activity, including their performance at that year's Azkena Rock Festival, which we attended. The Zoom conversation with Steven made it clear we were dealing with one of the most singular and heartwarming stories in American alternative rock. Amiable, lucid and talkative, he reflected on his present as a permanent member of The Melvins, with whom he has toured for nearly a decade, a connection dating back to the 1990s, when they crossed paths in the orbit of Yoko Ono. We discussed the eternal issue of elusive success. Steve acknowledged

frustration, particularly during the era of “Third Eye” and the pressure from a major label, yet he put it in perspective by recalling the tragic fates of figures like Kurt Cobain, Chris Cornell and Scott Weiland, and quoting the phrase “be careful what you wish for because you might get it”. He preferred to speak about what he now considers success: stable families, intact creativity and the possibility of a third act yet to be written. Anecdotes about KISS, The Beatles or Quentin Tarantino filled more than an hour of fascinating conversation with one of the most lovable figures in rock. We chose “Third Eye” as we might have chosen “Phaseshifter”, “Show World” or “Researching the Blues”, but with tracks like “Annie’s Gone”, “Love Is Not Love” or “Bubblegum Factory” they came closest to that success they were perhaps fortunate not to fully reach. A wonderful band and a fundamental record for me.

Javistone

“Get It Out”, La Perra Blanco



This woman is something else. A beast on stage, Alba Blanco never stops surprising with every release. The fabulous “Get It Out” is not just a rockabilly record, it is an album made to keep your feet off the ground. From the cannon blast that is “So Blue and So Bad”, capable of raising the dead, to the rhythm and blues groove of “Why Don’t You Love Me”, the album is a compendium of swing, seventies pop rock and an unstoppable hurricane that shows the artist from La Línea de la Concepción growing with every chord. Her mastery on guitar makes her, in my view, the finest female artist on the national scene. No one attends one of her concerts without being struck by the magic of her strings. Alba is pure nerve, inspiration and energy. And they say rock and roll is dead? Allow me to laugh.

Ada Salas

“Killer Kin”, Killer Kin

Issue 40 of Rock Bottom Magazine was possibly one of the most exciting we have ever published. We had to put out three covers: La Perra Blanco, Redd Kross and Killer Kin. The unexpected surprise, and not the only one, came straight from Connecticut in the form of the greasiest, rowdiest, old-school rock imaginable. Killer Kin’s self-titled debut did not just blow our minds, it tore them off and hurled them against the nearest wall. From the first listen we knew this was special, one of those records that justify the existence of a magazine like Rock Bottom Magazine. Raw, fierce and abrasive, yet surprisingly solid in its



songwriting, it captures the most primitive and dangerous essence of rock and roll. There is grime, sweat and attitude, but also structure, choruses that stick like rusty knives and an energy that cannot be manufactured in a studio. Matt’s voice is pure controlled chaos, a beast straining at the cage, while Chloe’s guitar is fire straight from hell, sharp, insolent and devastating. Killer Kin are a ticking time bomb destined to endure. In a scene saturated with harmless bands, they sound dangerous, urgent and real. A record you do not merely listen to, you celebrate and survive.

Javistone

“Go Home”, 95 Bulls



Without a doubt, one of my most exciting moments across these fifty issues was stumbling upon this gang of misfits that are 95 Bulls. Their record “Go Home” was the kick in the mouth that anyone daring to say rock is dead desperately needs. In the very same issue where Josh Homme reigns on the cover, we interviewed vocalist Emily Ashenden, a colossal vocal force who takes no prisoners. Emily understands rock as a physical and mental state, a place where anxiety, rage and vital urgency are channeled without filters or aesthetic alibis. What is truly overwhelming is how that conversation reinforces the dimension of the record. “Go Home” is not just an explosive debut, it is a living artifact that keeps growing with every listen and that finds in Emily’s voice its main weapon. A throat that borders on the inhuman, overflowing, savage, capable of turning songs into pure electric discharges. The interview helps to understand that such intensity is not a pose nor exaggeration, but an almost instinctive response to a hostile world and to a scene that, fortunately, continues breathing at the margins. The references they cite, from Lost Sounds to Pissed Jeans or Devo, fit together like pieces of a puzzle that resembles no other. Pounding rhythms, street punk, Farfisa keyboards with a venomous aroma and choruses that stick like knives, everything in “Go Home” is designed to provoke a physical reaction. To dance, to sweat, to scream, to lose your voice. The interview also makes clear the obscene contrast between veteran bands filling stadiums and projects like 95 Bulls barely surviving, when it is precisely they who keep the nerve of rock alive. That is why this record is so important: because it restores faith, because it sounds urgent, dangerous and real. If the future of rock runs anywhere, it runs here, in this colossal album that demands small venues, bodies in motion and volume pushed to the limit. Put on “Crazy” and you will understand everything else.

Javistone

“Kind of Blue”, Miles Davis



In August 1958 the indispensable “Kind of Blue” by Miles Davis was released, the best-selling jazz album in history. Recorded with John Coltrane, Julian “Cannonball” Adderley, Bill Evans and Wynton Kelly, Paul Chambers and Jimmy Cobb, it is considered one of the greatest milestones of the genre. Why return to this essential chapter of music history? Why not. “So What” and “Blue in Green” stand as timeless pieces. The example of a work that bridges Armstrong’s earliest jazz to Coltrane’s avant-garde, a sonic distance filled with nuance flowing through hypnotic melodies. Listening to “Kind of Blue” should be prescribed by any medical professional and required for any lover of music.

Ada Salas

“In Times New Roman”, Queens of the Stone Age

Reaching fifty issues implies looking back and asking ourselves which records best explain not only an era, but also a way of understanding rock. In that journey, “In Times New Roman” (reviewed by yours truly in issue 35) occupies a central, almost inevitable place. We are not only speaking of the discographic return of Queens



of the Stone Age after six years of silence, but of the confirmation that Josh Homme remains a key figure to understand contemporary rock. The former Kyuss guitarist has not only built a career of his own, he has shifted the axis of rock over the last twenty years with his musical conception (with Queens, the Desert Sessions, that masterpiece that is "Post Pop Depression" by Iggy Pop…), something that very few, did I say few?, have managed without renouncing distortion and the fierceness of their proposal. Since "Villains", a record that divided opinions, the band seemed installed in a more cerebral search, even Martian at times. However, in "In Times New Roman" Homme decides to go for the bone. The personal context, marked by family problems and a serious illness, filters into a rough album, that unsettling cover being the visual reflection of the record's atmosphere, dense and at the same time direct, where each song seems carved in stone. In "In Times New Roman" there are sharp riffs, demolishing rhythms and a feeling of almost suffocating density that were not perceived in other works. And it is that tracks such as "Obscenery", "Negative Space" or "Paper Machete" function like a punch to the face, while cuts like "Made to Parade" or "Emotion Sickness" elevate the album to an emotional and almost physical plane, with "Carnavoyeur" as the absolute peak that still makes the skin crawl. It is an album meant to be listened to in full, without distractions, one of those that grows with every spin. Its importance within the magazine is further reinforced by their concert at Azkena 2024 (issue 41, July 2024, with an overwhelming cover of Homme on stage at Mendizorroza), the sole reason why yours truly made, for the first and last time so far, the pilgrimage to Vitoria. Homme's authority on stage, this is what I wrote back then: "The fucking Josh Homme is immeasurable, he radiates charisma and a personality that right now is beyond anyone's reach, he looks strong, powerful, sexy at times, he sings with tremendous confidence, who would have said that that young guitarist from Kyuss would end up doing falsettos, right?". Definitely, In Times New Roman we trust.

Javistone

"The Return of Tomorrow", Fu Manchu



With "The Return…", the kings of the monolithic riff delighted us after a six-year wait with what they do best: another brutal collection of songs where power and quality are the main weapons. Thirteen ticking bombs where Scott Hill and company worship the heaviest sounds,



referencing Black Sabbath or Judas Priest while embracing progressive edges. Tracks like "Loch Ness Wrecking Machine", "Hands of the Zodiac", "Dehumanize" or the title track unleash devastating sonic chaos.
A triumphant return worthy of the Californian legend and rightful standard bearers of stoner rock.

Marcos Sánchez

"Boom! Dynamite", The Courettes



"I like every era of rock music, I love rock and roll, from rockabilly and doo wop to 60s girl groups and garage (my greatest passion), psychedelia, proto-punk, glam, punk rock, post-punk, shoegaze, britpop, grunge, riot grrrl… every era has great things that influenced me while I was growing up". That's how the fabulous Flavia Couri described her influences, one half of this original Brazilian-Danish duo that moves effortlessly between Phil Spector's Wall of Sound and garage rock. And their sound more than deserved the cover of this issue. Without a doubt, "Boom! Dynamite" is the perfect recipe for lovers of Motown and the entire 60s decade. An energetic blast that teleports you straight to girl groups and to what, for me, was the most glorious era of music coming out of the US. The Courettes' catalogue, of course, goes beyond that. But if today you feel like revisiting the old Ike & Turner or The Shangri-Las, don't hesitate to put this record on and get ready to dance.

Ada Salas

"El Sótano", Manola



A few days ago, several of us were asked by eldiario.es to indicate what would be our favorite records of this century so far, those we could classify as the best albums of the last twenty-five years. I tried to be fair, even though these kinds of lists are always complicated and many that should be there inevitably remain outside. I tried to be fair, but above all I tried to give visibility to works that I consider grandiose and that do not have or have not had the impact that, from my point of view, they deserve. There are several on this list, in fact (Lapido or Duane Betts, for example), but if there was one I took particular pleasure in including, it was "El Sótano" by Manola. A record made with the same level of talent as honesty and artistic depth. Teresa Ríos, keyboardist for Rufus T. Firefly, stepped forward to express herself and gave us a collection of songs of

moving elegance and beauty. An album that is born from nothing other than pure artistic necessity (does that sound familiar? This is Rock Bottom Magazine and its foundations are built upon artistic necessity), is, as I said in the introduction to the interview she granted us (issue 44, where Manola rightfully reigns on the cover), one of those works that by themselves justify the existence of a magazine like Rock Bottom Magazine: music made from within, without emotional concessions, without prior calculation and with a truth that pierces the listener from the very first listen. Recorded in the basement of her parents' house, the album transforms that physical space into a powerful emotional metaphor: it is refuge, isolation and direct confrontation with one's own shadows. From there emerges a collection of songs of sometimes painful beauty, traversed by a raw vulnerability that multiplies their artistic value. Far from being a simple promising debut, "El Sótano" is a fully formed, elegant and profound album that moves naturally through pop, soul, funk and black music, without ever falling into pastiche or imitation. Tracks such as "Adicción", "1977" or "I'm Not Looking Back" demonstrate exceptional compositional pulse, a voice capable of disarming without artifice and a formidable artistic personality. Manola represents the courage Teresa needed to invoke in order not to deny herself, and that gesture runs through the entire record. Her discourse connects fully with the philosophy of Rock Bottom: betting on music as an act of faith, on artists who understand art as an inner path and on albums that grow over time. For all these reasons, "El Sótano" not only stands out for its enormous musical quality, but embodies in exemplary fashion the spirit that has guided Rock Bottom Magazine for fifty issues as a testimony of honesty, talent and creative resistance.

Javistone

41. "Tormentas malsanas", Las Nubes

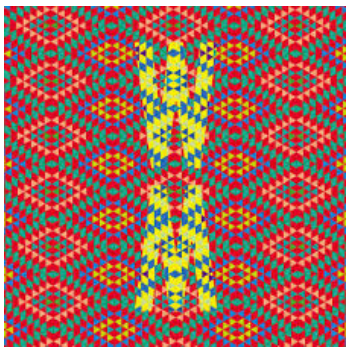
In the same issue where Manola appeared on the cover, issue 44 from January 2025, Las Nubes were interviewed, presenting this essential "Tormentas malsanas" through Spinda Records, without a doubt one of the most stimulating proposals in American alternative rock of the last few years, coming straight out of Miami, for those of us who still miss the fury of the early 90s. If their debut "SMVT" (2019) was recorded with minimal resources and a lot of creative urgency, the new record keeps the essence of the project completely intact, but raises it thanks to a more



careful production that enhances its strength without taming it. The result is a more solid, more defined and, above all, more ambitious work where saturated guitars, full-on fuzz and pop melodies coexist with a more than notable emotional weight, a direct heir to those grunge bands, but reinterpreted through a contemporary sensibility. The cultural duality of Ale Campos and Emile Milgrim runs through the entire album, not only sonically but also in the natural use of multiple languages, Spanish, English and even Portuguese, a direct reflection of what it means to grow up in a city like Miami, deeply Latin and musically hybrid. The record also works as a broad emotional portrait, where anger, tenderness, melancholy and euphoria all fit. Songs like "Caricia" or "Silhouetted Man" show a band capable of moving between the hypnotic, the intimate and the abrasive, leaning on diverse and well-assimilated references. And on top of that, Iggy Pop chose them as his backing band. No small thing.

Javistone

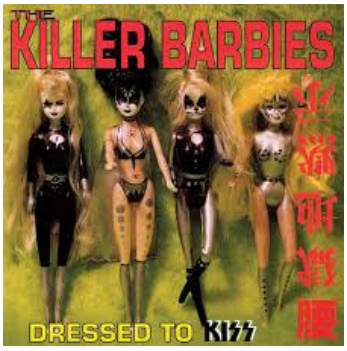
42. "World Music", Goat



If there is a band that represents what this whole journey with the magazine has meant for the one writing this, it is without a doubt Goat. The mysterious Swedish band appeared by chance on my player and when I started pulling the thread, I found an absolutely colossal band, with enormous sonic depth, an overwhelming personality, a mystery that covers everything… but above all a handful of songs that hit you like a herd of unleashed buffalo running you over. If on record this "World Music" had already hooked me, when I was able to see their performance at Glastonbury, that was on another level entirely: a psychedelic staging, almost tribal sounds, outfits more suited to ancient rituals… it all formed something absolutely thrilling. And the fact that there was barely any information about them, hardly any interviews, no one knows their faces, always wearing ritual masks… only made them even more attractive. And if since 2012 "World Music" had already captured us, from the moment Rock Bottom Magazine began breathing in 2017 I didn't rest until I managed to contact them and speak with the mysterious Goatman, who told us about the origins of the band and the reason behind the masks. In a desperate attempt to enter the goat sect, the tribal leader stated: "you can join Goat, it's easy to do, just put on a mask and play some fuzz". If with songs like "Goatman", "Disco Fever", "Run To Your Mama" from this record, or "Union Of Mind And Soul", "Let It Burn" or "Queen of the Underground" from their other great album, "Headsoup" (2021), you don't lose your mind and your feet don't start dancing possessed by some ancestral force… you might want to get that checked. One of the most exciting bands of the last twenty years and nobody seems to notice. Except Rock Bottom Magazine.

Javistone

43. "Dressed to Kiss", The Killer Barbies



Issue 46, in May 2025, had a clear Galician accent, with both the cover and the back cover dedicated to two bands from Galicia. If Zålomon Grass appeared on the back cover after the interview we did with them because of the release of their fantastic "Trouble in Time", the cover featured one of the great fetish bands of the one writing this, none other than The Killer Barbies, who were releasing their addictive "El pop se autodestruirá en 4, 3, 2, 1…". We were able to chat with the goddess Silvia Superstar and the great Billy King about their entire career, from when they emerged in the 90s in the middle of the grunge fever with a radically different proposal, based on fun, color, punk-pop and an aesthetic as powerful as it was self-aware. Their debut, "Dressed to Kiss", quickly turned them into a cult band, thanks to immediate songs, overflowing attitude and an image that connected with B-movie imagery, glam and the most unapologetic rock and roll. Songs like "Love Killer", "I Wanna Live In Tromaville" or their version of "Skulls" by the Misfits made their debut album a true gem that remains intact in my record collection. From there on, the band's trajectory became a dizzying succession of milestones unusual for a Spanish band of their generation. Songs in television commercials, collaborations with the cinema of Jess Franco, international tours and a direct invitation from Joey Ramone to play at the legendary CBGB in New York placed The Killer Barbies in a clearly international orbit. Those years were lived as a real creative and vital whirlwind, marked by intensity, media exposure and constant activity that eventually led to a necessary break in the early 2000s. The band returned years later with the same artistic conviction, reclaiming their legacy without giving up evolution. Their story reflects not only a way of understanding rock as attitude and lifestyle, but also a way of resisting trends, embracing difference and building an identity outside of labels. The Killer Barbies belong to that lineage of bands that, beyond massive recognition, have already left their mark on rock and roll. Larger than life… even

if you send them yearbook after yearbook and it seems like none of them ever reach them.

Javistone

44. “No temáis por mí”, Hendrik Röver



Talking about Hendrik Röver is talking about a very specific way of understanding rock in this country, a way based on consistency, craftsmanship and an almost unbreakable faith in the song. Röver is the creative engine behind Los DelTonos, Los Míticos GT’s and his solo records, a craftsman of sound, a prolific songwriter and a producer who has turned his studio, Guitar Town, into a reference space for several generations of musicians. Over decades of career, Hendrik has built an extensive songbook that does not live off nostalgia nor dwell in the past. Every album is, as he himself defines in any of the three interviews we have done with him (issues 11, 15 and 47), a photograph of a specific moment in life. That idea runs through works like “Fuego”, one of the recent creative peaks of Los DelTonos, an album that combines immediacy, rock muscle and a reflective undertone that invites you to react, not to stand still. In his lyrics there is disillusionment, yes, but also a clear will not to give up, to keep moving forward with the conviction that the best is always yet to come. Röver is an eminently practical musician. That mindset is reflected both in his way of composing, based on the patient accumulation of riffs and ideas, and in his relationship with live performance and the studio. Open tunings, functional solutions, guitars understood as working tools and not sacred objects. Everything is at the service of the song and the live show, two territories where Hendrik moves with complete naturalness. His parallel facet with Los Míticos GT’s reinforces that idea of constant movement. Records like “Vamos a morir” show his love for blues and boogie, always filtered through a very recognizable personality, far from cliché and academicism. Röver takes classic styles and twists them just enough to make them his own, current and believable, even when singing in Spanish about territories traditionally associated with American roots rock. I allow myself to choose his wonderful album “No temáis por mí” from 2010 because it was the first one through which I came into contact with the universe of the Cantabrian-German musician, a true folk delight that smells of fireplaces and meadows. In any case, an indispensable figure in Rock Bottom Magazine throughout these 50 issues. In fact, in this very issue Marcos reviews “El Futuro”, the latest album by Los DelTonos. A giant.

Javistone



45. “Is Forming”, The Crystal Teardrop

The Crystal Teardrop perfectly represent the spirit of Rock Bottom: free music, creativity without prejudice, passion… Formed in 2022 in London, the band was born from the shared love among its members for 60s psychedelia and garage, a fascination that soon translated into a solid and carefully built project. The group adopted a name that refers both to their sonic imagery and to an organic way of understanding music as a collective process. The Crystal Teardrop are an active part of a living and constantly moving British psychedelic scene, with London as its natural epicenter. Their sound openly drinks from classic psychedelia, jangle pop and garage, integrating influences ranging from the great names of the 60s to the Paisley Underground scene of the 80s and contemporary American psychedelia. The band defends psychedelia as a space of creative freedom, experimentation and breaking boundaries, values they identify with the spirit of the late 60s and reinterpret from a modern sensibility without falling into the simplicity of retro pastiche. Songs like “By the River” (what a song, what a song!) or “Colours Changing” reflect that desire to evoke other emotional and perceptive states, incorporating Eastern instrumentation, hypnotic structures and lyrics full of natural and spiritual symbolism. Their full-length debut, “Is Forming”, recorded entirely in analog and live, reaffirms this commitment to the organic and the handcrafted in a context dominated by the digital and the immediate. For The Crystal Teardrop, making psychedelic rock today is a form of cultural resistance and an affirmation of authenticity. From the very first moment I heard them, one of my favorite British bands.

Javistone

46. “Mientras las abejas duermen”, Mientras las abejas duermen

Only good things can come out of the Sierra de Cádiz. And that’s exactly what these guys from Ubrique have proven, whom we were lucky



enough to meet during the latest edition of the 6 Grupos 6 contest. A trio that stepped onto the stage at Alameda del Banco in Jerez wearing football shirts, their guitars, a microphone and a powerful drum kit that thundered across the whole square. They are the magicians of Cádiz psychedelia. They’ve built a first EP that they describe as a progressive journey, and nothing could be more accurate. In their songs you’ll find stoner, sound atmospheres that wrap around you until they knock you out, and even a hint of Andalusian rock. Essential listening if you want to understand the emerging rock coming out of the south.

Ada Salas

47. “Affari Di Famiglia”, Los Farelli



One of the most beloved bands in Rock Bottom Magazine? One of the most beloved bands in Rock Bottom Magazine. Back cover in the distant issue 9 of March 2019 (with a majestic photo by Ester García) and cover in issue 43 in November 2024 on the occasion of the release of their third album, “Affari Di Famiglia”, possibly their best record, without taking anything away from the previous ones, especially “Uomini Rispettati”, which was another absolute bomb, cover again with a photo by Ester, who would repeat on the back cover with a beautiful image of Nat Simons. With those “family affairs” they not only managed to polish their studio sound even further (because live they are ALWAYS a well-oiled machine), they introduced a new member on drums and invited some friends from different bands around the province of Cádiz (some apparently invited themselves, and well… they don’t know how to say no to anything!) and put together a fantastic album featuring people like our dear Guillermo Alvah (our friendship goes back to a concert I helped organize for Guillermo’s former band, Salvaje Lola, and to calling the Farellis as the opening act), Jaime Moreno (The Electric Alley), Pito (Txuminos Imberbes) or José Carlos Macías (Magott Brain), among others, who bring different nuances to the songs and boost the energy of tracks that demand to be sung at the top of your lungs with a beer held high. The interview Ester and I did with them took place in their “secret” lair that they share with Bourbon near Sanlúcar, just like we did in 2019 (back then my daughter Lucía came along too). It was a delight. Anything involving Juandi and the rest is absolute chaos in the best way: laughter, anecdotes and an unbreakable faith in this thing called rock and roll. One of the most beloved bands in Rock Bottom Magazine? One of the most beloved bands in Rock Bottom

Magazine. If there were more bands like the Farelli, the world would be a much more fun place.

Javistone

48. "Vol.2", Tarque



I never thought this would be possible, but thanks to the good work of the boss (Javistone), I ended up interviewing one of my idols of Spanish rock, Carlos Tarque, on the occasion of the release of his second solo album, "Vol.2". And if he had already left us open-mouthed with "Tarque" and his return to a more classic style, with his second record it was no different. It seems he's developed a taste for "doing what truly interests me. What I can't do any other way than on my own," as he said in the interview, and "Vol.2" shows up like a steamroller, delighting us with a wild forcefulness and the aftertaste of dirty, powerful guitars at the hands of his inseparable partner-in-crime Carlos Raya. From the overwhelming "He vuelto para veros arder", to the wonderful "Maldigo", where Carlos revives the essence of Willy Dixon, whose song was famously made their own by the band Cactus, Tarque once again positions himself as a frontman who feels completely at home within his own unique phrasing. A delicacy to savor without keeping your feet too firmly on the ground.

Ada Salas

49. "What's Goin' On", Marvin Gaye

The truth is I could have chosen the fabulous and unique record by Baby Huey, "The Baby Huey Story: The Living Legend", or the quintessential live soul album, "Live at Harlem Square Club" by Sam Cooke, but no: as a fan to the bone of Marvin Gaye, I preferred to praise the virtues of a capital work, not only of soul but of twentieth-century contemporary music, as I explained in my section "Keep the soul alive" in issue 35 of Rock Bottom. Released on May 21, 1971, rather than a compilation of songs, it should be considered a concept





album, the first "manufactured" at Motown, the first in the history of soul music. Marvin Gaye wanted to go beyond a collection of melodies; to do so, he developed narrative structures, unifying themes and listening experiences that would impact the listener, that would force them to think about what they had just heard, not simply hum along to a pretty melody. He created one of the greatest musical and social statements of the past century with the mastery and skill that characterized all of his work, with an innovative sonic language that captured the street echo not just of cities like Memphis or Detroit, but of every corner of the country. I advise you to dive into its dimension, I'm sure you'll come out victorious…

J.L. Crespo, "ZepiSoul"

50. "Tormentas imaginarias", 091



What better record to close this review of the fifty albums that best represent these fifty issues of Rock Bottom Magazine than one by the band featured on the cover of issue fifty. It goes without saying what the Granada band means to the one writing this, which is why Lapido and José Antonio have always had their space in these pages since issue number two. But beyond that, we have also witnessed from this privileged balcony the wonderful resurrection and the formidable reaction from the audience that "forced" Tacho, Jacinto and the rest to resume their recording career, something absolutely unthinkable years earlier, a dream, really. "Tormentas imaginarias" may not be the favorite record, the quintessential album of their career, I haven't conducted a study among their fans to find out, but I do know it is my favorite album. It was the first 091 record I ever bought, understand how important that is to me. Those songs are part of my own history: "La calle del viento", "Zapatos de piel de caimán", "Huellas", "Todo comienza a girar", "Sin raíces", "Un cielo color vino", "Otros como yo", "Para impresionarte", "Mi sombra y yo", "Tormentas imaginarias", "El fantasma de la soledad"… my life would not make sense without songs like these as both soundtrack and emotional landscape. They don't know it, but their music saved my life on countless occasions by making me feel less alone. Essential record, essential band. See you in another fifty issues, and 091 and their "Tormentas imaginarias" will still be there.

Javistone

Blaze Bayley, Sala Rock City, Burjassot (Valencia)



On a freezing January night in Burjassot, Sala Rock City, one of Valencia's most dependable heavy metal strongholds, opened its doors for the first date of a world tour many fans once assumed would never happen. Blaze Bayley, the British metal veteran whose work ethic borders on myth and whose career could be taught as a masterclass in resilience, arrived to launch the 25th anniversary celebration of "Silicon Messiah", the cult album that marked his rebirth after Iron Maiden.

To grasp the weight of the evening, you have to understand the place "Silicon Messiah" holds in modern metal history. Released in 2000, it was Bayley's first album after five turbulent years fronting Iron Maiden, a period that produced "The X Factor" and "Virtual XI", divided the fanbase, and expanded the band's emotional and philosophical range. When Bruce Dickinson returned, Bayley found himself back at square one. Instead of stepping away, he built a new band and wrote a record that traded stadium melodrama for darker futurism, tackling AI, surveillance, transhumanism, digital alienation and fragile identity. With hindsight, it feels uncannily ahead of its time. In Valencia, for the first time, he performed it in full, track by track, with the conviction of someone who has lived every line.

Opening duties fell to Baja California, the Spanish hard rock outfit with enough grit and melodic punch to thaw January's chill. They treated the slot as a celebration, not a formality. Riffs cut sharp, choruses demanded raised fists, and their easy banter felt like shared tequila shots. In half an hour, Rock City shifted from venue to ignition chamber. By the time they left the stage, the crowd wasn't just warm. It was restless.

Valencia was not only the first Spanish stop, it was the first night of the entire 2026 world tour. There was symbolic weight in that, and Bayley seemed aware of it. When he finally walked onstage, he did so not with star detachment but with wide-eyed gratitude, fists clenched, smiling like a man still surprised that people show up, buy tickets and shout his lyrics back at him.

From the opening bars of "Silicon Messiah", a jolt ran through the room. The band, tight and disciplined, delivered the album with precision and force. "Ghost in the Machine" rang out with prophetic clarity in today's age of algorithmic surveillance. "Identity" felt expansive, almost operatic. "Stare at



the Sun" struck like a confession echoing through a cathedral. Themes that once sounded like speculative fiction now feel like documentary.

What sets Bayley apart isn't only his baritone weight or metallic edge, it's the narrative thread he weaves between songs. Some frontmen bark commands. Bayley tells stories. He spoke about rebuilding after Maiden, about surviving a ruthless industry, about the absurd logistics of touring Europe in his sixties, and about how science fiction quietly became reality.

There was no ego armor, no rock-god theatrics. Instead, it felt like a pub conversation with someone who once fronted one of metal's biggest bands. He thanked the audience constantly, mid-sentence, mid-breath. It never sounded rehearsed. The fans didn't just applaud him, they rooted for him.

The interaction wasn't decoration, it was the bloodstream of the show. Bayley demanded voices, fists and movement, and Valencia delivered all three. At one point he split the crowd into call-and-response sections, like a metal choir under drill-sergeant direction. He roared, they roared back. It felt communal, unruly and alive, exactly as heavy metal should.

There is something striking about Bayley today: the road-hardened discipline of a veteran wrapped in the sincere gratitude of a newcomer. In an era of overproduced tours and algorithmic spontaneity, that combination feels almost radical. The encore, packed with deeper cuts and post-Maiden favorites, ended the night in flames. No one left early. Every fist stayed raised.

This 25th anniversary tour of "Silicon Messiah" is not nostalgia. It is reclamation. An album underestimated in 2000 has matured into a cult classic that speaks directly to 2026. Hearing it performed in full revealed how well it has aged and how many of its anxieties came true. Valencia received the first chapter, and it was clear Bayley intends this tour to matter.

When the lights came up, no one rushed for the exits. Merch lines formed. The band packed their own gear. Bayley himself stepped out to shake hands, sign records, take photos and thank fans one by one. No VIP barriers. No add-ons. No distance. Just a working-class artist embodying dignity in real time. Twenty-five years after "Silicon Messiah", Blaze Bayley remains something rare in heavy metal: not only a survivor, but a believer.

Rhyan Paul



“Rock can be sung, it can be played on the guitar, it can be danced to, and it can be read”

By José Ignacio Lapido



I must have been around fourteen the first time I bought a music book. A second-hand book stall in a small town on the coast of Granada, where I used to spend summers with my parents and siblings. It was a paperback biography of The Beatles by Hunter Davies. I suppose my brother Javier and I stumbled upon it by chance while looking for Sven Hassel novels. We already owned several Beatles LPs and records by other sixties bands, and buying that copy felt necessary in order to understand those songs that had taken over our brains and that we played over and over on the Dual Better Stereo turntable my father had bought in ’69, the year I made my First Communion.

Let us say it was my baptism by fire into rock literature. Read and reread until the pages began to come loose from the spine. After that came other books revealing the secrets of the artists we admired. The volumes published by Ediciones Júcar were providential for many rock fans who, in the mid-seventies, had barely any other way of learning about records and artists. “El Rock Inglés”, by Alain Dister. “Bob Dylan”, by Ordovás. “La Historia del Rock”, by the indefatigable Jordi Sierra i Fabra. In short, it was a time of scarcity for music lovers: few records and even fewer books. Fortunately, the music press was beginning to take off, and that was where we found refuge and answers to some of the questions fluttering around in our heads, little mad heads flooded with rock and roll fantasies. Occasional articles in Star, an issue or two of Disco Express, Vibraciones, Popular Uno, later Rock Espezial. I even still keep a few copies of El Gran Musical by Joaquín Luqui somewhere. One of them with Bob Dylan on the cover, who had just released “Hurricane”.

What I mean with this brief visit to my musical and bibliographical past is that rock can be sung, it can be played on the guitar, it can be danced to, and it can be read. As a musician, it was very important for me to know certain things about the musicians I admired, even about those I did not particularly care for. Those readings shaped the way I confronted the world.

Let these memories from an old lover of rock and roll serve as a tribute to Rock Bottom Magazine and to my friend Javi Torreira, who regularly introduces us to the lives and miracles of both well-known and lesser-known artists and throws wide open lives and works that, at a given moment, may illuminate our own. Fifty issues may seem like a lot, but they are only the first half of the hundred you are surely going to publish. A well-intentioned and titanic endeavor in these times when stupidity runs free across the networks. This one is for you.

The Capi's corner



"The Land of Rain and Blood", The Diesel Dogs

Fifty issues is a very significant milestone for a music magazine, and I believe it deserves to be celebrated in style. Fifty editions telling great stories, marking a remarkable evolution of this outstanding magazine since its beginnings, and one that I am certain will leave an essential legacy for the future. Fifty issues are not simply printed, they are built with vision, hard work, and heart. May many more come. From here, before anything else, congratulations to Javi for that tremendous work, and of course to the rest of the contributors, myself included.

But let us move on to what has been requested of us, a review worthy of this celebratory issue. I am referring to the newly released EP by the Madrid-based band of Basque origin, The Diesel Dogs, titled "The Land Of Rain and Blood", and once again released by the Madrid label Ghost Highway Recordings, as they have accustomed us to. It is well known that this band thrives on electricity and energy, not to mention their devotion to groups such as The Clash. However, to celebrate their 20th anniversary, they are also in celebration mode, they have opted for an acoustic approach with a clear Americana sound, something that has accompanied the band for several years now, with artists like Nick Cave and Amigo The Devil clearly in their sights.

Before sharing my own impressions, I would rather let Javi explain what this remarkable new EP is about: "These are songs set in the 80s and 90s in the Basque Country, a place and a time full of half-truths and half-lies. With characters experiencing savage and irrational violence, repression, economic restructuring, and social abandonment, the plague of heroin… but also about kids trying to grow up like all kids do, in more or less dysfunctional families, hanging out with friends, searching for their first loves… before adulthood arrives with its burdens, all within an environment that was absurd and brutal for many of the reasons already mentioned. It seemed to me that it was a very cinematic time and place, with great narrative potential, and I felt the need to revisit that period of our land from the distance that time provides. As I say elsewhere, this record is both a settling of accounts and a declaration of love. These songs required this sonic approach: total austerity, acoustic guitars and little else, maybe some harmonica, pedal steel… it was more important that the vocal take we recorded was emotional and conveyed something than that it was technically perfect. It had to feel as though we were playing these songs in an empty room".

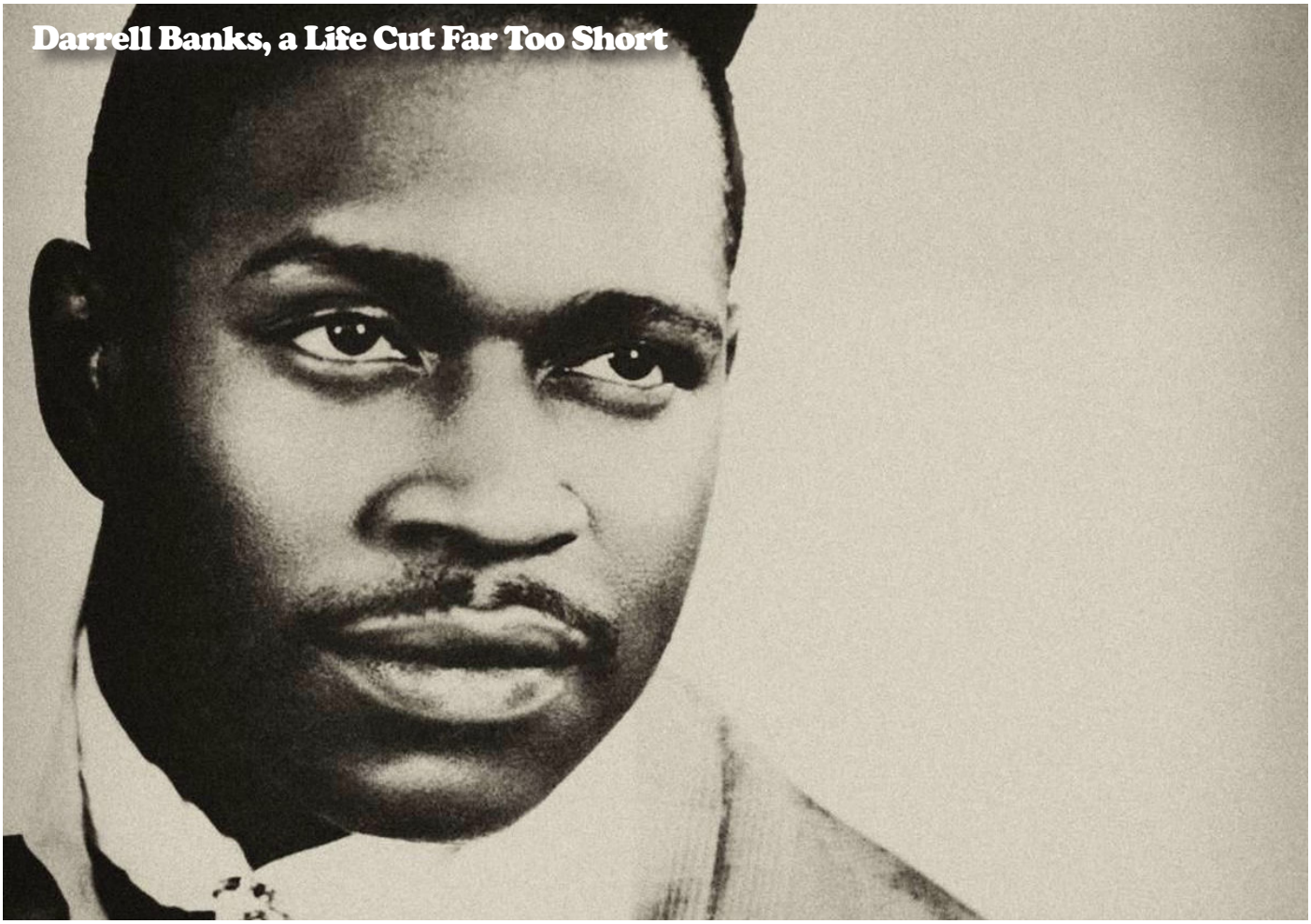
Honestly, I am more of a distortion fan, but I have to admit that I have completely surrendered to this acoustic EP, where they step away from their usual electrified rock to embrace a more essential and stripped-down format: acoustic guitars, voice, and minimal percussion. It is a work that has sparked intense commentary in the specialized press for its rawness, honesty, and narrative boldness.

What stands out most about this new EP is not only its format but its narrative conception. Each song is a story in itself, set in a turbulent Basque Country of the 80s and 90s, a period marked by political violence, social abandonment, and a generational identity crisis.

Furthermore, and this is a personal perception, I believe that the "Land of Rain and Blood" is not merely a physical place but an emotional state: young people trapped between ideologies, fear, drugs, and silence. It is a tribute to the marginality of the left bank of the Bilbao estuary and to the tragic stories of friends, parents, and siblings who suffered deeply in the Basque Country because of drugs, with the northern rain as the constant soundtrack.

In short, what prevails here is the storytelling. The production is minimalist and nearly devoid of ornamentation, achieving a pure sound that will resonate the same on an old boombox, in a packed venue, or through your new high-fidelity system. I remain convinced that this new work by the Madrid band dispenses with artifice, embraces the essential, and distances itself from cheap romanticism, opting instead for raw and powerful stories, difficult ones above all. Perhaps it is a stark look at the past, at old stories in which, like in a mirror, many of us can clearly see ourselves reflected.

Darrell Banks, a Life Cut Far Too Short



The "fortunate" (forgive the modesty) readers who follow my modest writings are surely aware that the troubled and unfortunate lives of soul artists are my 'specialty'. It's not that I consider myself morbid (or do I?), nor that I enjoy dwelling on other people's misfortunes (not a chance!), I simply like to remember artists whose lives, for one reason or another, were closer to the color black than to heavenly blue (Erma Franklin, Marvin Gaye, Linda Jones, just to name a few). Darrell Banks heard the bells of hell toll far too soon.

He was born under a reversed sign of destiny on July 25, 1937, in Mansfield, Ohio: the illegitimate son of a seventeen-year-old teenager and a wandering father who fled, so his early years were spent under the care and guardianship of his maternal grandparents. Alongside his sister Loise, he began developing his vocal talent at the Shiloh Baptist Church, one of the oldest within the African American community. After the family moved to Buffalo, New York, he continued honing his craft in the church world, achieving that distinctive vocal range of his: scorching, sweet and passionate.

The logical step into secular music led him to join two bands, Daddy B Combo and Grand Prix, whose recordings I recommend digging up because his contribution truly makes a difference. After finishing high school, he married his lifelong girlfriend, Beverly Kay Simon; from that union came Darrell Jr. and Bamby Lynn who, after their parents separated in the mid-sixties, remained with their mother.

Banks was clear about one thing: his place was in front of a microphone, opening up his feelings and laying his heart bare, that very organ that became the centerpiece of the first release on the small Detroit label he had just signed to, Solid Hitbound Productions/ Revilot Records, a jewel worthy of World Heritage status called… "Open the Door to Your Heart" (1966), one of the most fabulous recordings in soul music and, by extension, in popular culture. But not everything was joy when that single hit the market…

Although credited to Darrell Banks, the song was largely written by Donnie Elbert, singer and songwriter, and "Open the Door" ended up credited to Banks due to a registration office error. Elbert was so furious that it led to legal proceedings over improper credit. In the end, thanks to their friendship and many endless nights closing down every bar in the Motor City, the matter was dropped. The syncopated mid-tempo track, performed with unprecedented sweetness and emotion (truth be told, you can count on your toes the number of songs from that era that convey so much, though maybe I'm exaggerating and should try listing them, but no, for now I'm sticking with this one), reached number two on the rhythm and blues charts and number twenty-seven on the Billboard Hot 100.

That same year saw the release of his next wonder, sorry, single, the rhythmic explosion "Somebody (Somewhere) Needs You", with fabulous backing vocals that later made it a coveted staple among the Northern club scene in England. Written by the magnificent Motown composer and singer Frank Wilson, originally intended for Ike & Tina Turner, it was our protagonist's version that truly, as we say in my neighborhood, "stole the show". It didn't come close to the chart levels of his previous single, but it didn't need to.
Step by step, his career grew stronger with several tours across the Midwest soul circuit, appearances on the classic variety TV show, the legendary Dick Clark's American Bandstand, and as an opening act for Jackie Wilson. In 1967 he signed with ATCO, a

subsidiary of Atlantic Records, releasing single after single, masterpiece after masterpiece: the heart-wrenching “Look Into the Eyes of a Fool”, the encyclopedic ballad “Here Come the Tears”, and his thrilling take on the classic “Angel Baby (Don’t You Leave Me)”, which in my opinion surpasses Stevie Wonder’s version. All these songs, along with other masterworks, were gathered on his first album, what I like to call “the four I’s record”: indispensable, untouchable, immeasurable and irreplaceable, an essential purchase if your body is craving SOUL, “Darrell Banks Is Here!”.

At his new label, Cotillion Records in New York City, he offered us a debut single worthy of framing and hanging above your bed, “I Wanna Go Home” / “The Love of My Woman” (1968). No matter how hard I try, I cannot be objective about these two immortal jewels that send me to the fifth or sixth galaxy in the Universe, especially the latter, pure high-voltage Southern soul with those stratospheric, signature backing vocals, reminding me of another of my weaknesses, the GREAT James Carr.

In constant evolution and movement, he took another crucial step in his career by signing with yet another classic subsidiary, this time of the quintessential Memphis soul label, Stax Records. I am, of course, talking about Volt. The first move was the reissue of that first album you must buy as soon as you finish this article (seriously, you cannot let “Darrell Banks Is Here!” slip by) in 1969. Shortly afterward, his boundless inspiration gave us two more 45 rpm masterpieces: “I’m the One Who Loves You”, a mid-tempo staple at the Wigan Casino dancefloor, and another double-sided offering of the finest soul music of all time, “Beautiful Feeling” / “No-One Blinder”, melodies to remember every single day of our lives.

At the end of that year, another outstanding collection of songs was released under the crushing title “Here To Stay”. Yes, Darrell Banks was here to stay, acclaimed by music critics, with yet another magnificent catalogue that included celebrated adaptations of Jerry Butler’s “Only the Strong Survive”, the tear-jerking “When a Man Loves a Woman”, as well as songs written exclusively for him such as “Forgive Me”, “Never Alone” and “Just Because Your Love Is Gone”, another essential album.

But all this musical uproar had a “but”: his unruly and combative character, which led him from one altercation to another, from one drunken night to the next, in the company of some of the city’s most undesirable characters. And in one of those episodes, what was reported in the March 4, 1970 edition of the Michigan Chronicle took place: a bullet fired by an off-duty police officer ended the life of singer Darrell Banks, who had made history among his peers in the entertainment world years earlier by scoring a million-selling hit with “Open the Door”.

Banks, thirty-three years old, was fatally wounded the previous week by Patrolman Aaron Bullock, who was attempting to intervene in an alleged assault by the singer on Marjorie Bozeman. According to witness statements, Bullock was dropping Miss Bozeman off at her home on Detroit’s west side at around 11 a.m. on Tuesday when Banks, who had been waiting in his car near the house, approached the couple and grabbed Miss Bozeman by the coat, stating that he and she were going to talk. Bullock identified himself as a police officer and ordered Banks to release Miss Bozeman. Banks then pulled a .22 caliber revolver from his belt and pointed it at the patrolman. Reportedly, Bullock ducked, drew his gun, aimed and fired a shot that struck Banks in the neck. Banks was taken to New Grace Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 12:10 p.m.
Mrs. Bozeman, a waitress at a bar in Northwest Detroit, told investigators that she and Banks had been close friends but that she was trying to end the relationship. Friends of Miss Bozeman reported that the couple had last been seen together on Sunday, February 22.

The tragic incident was initially attempted to be silenced by the local police, as an officer was involved in a homicide allegedly motivated by a case of adultery. In fact, the death occurred on February 24, and as you have seen, it was not reported in the press until eight days later, while the ill-fated singer had already been buried on the 2nd at Detroit Memorial Park, in an unmarked grave due to the financial hardships of the time. That same night, a benefit gala was held starring Martha and The Vandellas, personal friends of the singer. Many years later, thanks to the efforts of a tribute website and contributions from fans, enough money was raised to engrave his headstone with his name; the site has since become a place of pilgrimage for any self-respecting soul fan (it remains a pending visit for me).

Sadly, as the years passed, his impeccable legacy faded from public memory, although his records have always remained coveted and hard-to-find items. In 2013, the essential anthology “I’m the One Who Loves You – The Volt Records” (Ace Records, London) was released. The following year, thousands of pounds were offered for an original copy of the single “Open the Door to Your Heart” because when EMI Records acquired the rights to the song from its original label, London Records, all copies were destroyed; in theory, the auctioned record was the only one in existence. As always, there is some controversy over whether that single truly was the only surviving copy. Be that as it may, the final sale price was fourteen thousand pounds sterling, not bad at all. Seven singles, two albums, an exceptional and inimitable voice, an indomitable character, and a bullet that pierced his neck and killed him instantly at the age of thirty-three. That was Darrell Banks.



I Trust You

By Manola



In a world where everything is fleeting and speed is our constant, there are still places, spaces and moments where time stands still. Life has turned into audio played at x1.5 speed, and people have started to forget that that damned time is still our most precious asset. Albums die under the impatience of those who consume them, and artists are increasingly pushed toward immediacy and information overload. That's why today I'm sitting in front of my computer, thinking about the beautiful opportunity I've been given, not only to write about this magazine, but to be encouraged to pause my life for a while and reflect without rushing.

I have never felt part of my generation and, at times, not even part of this world. I often joke about the utopian wish of having been born in the 1950s, but in reality this goes much deeper than simply not having to depend on technology. As much as I try to accept it, life keeps placing in front of me the fact that everything is changing, and that shouldn't be a bad thing until I realize that there are fewer shoemakers, fewer greengrocers, fewer cashiers and, above all, less paper.

A few months ago, I had the pleasant surprise of receiving the latest edition of this magazine and, without knowing it, the experience changed a part of me. When the package arrived, I sat down in my garden and, as if it were Three Kings' Day, I opened that envelope as if it were a gift. And what a paradox, because it truly was. As soon as I held the magazine in my hands, I made a gesture I barely remembered, I had probably gone years without smelling a brand-new book. In that moment my senses came alive and, with a smile, I remembered that no matter how much life changes and things evolve, we should not give up those gestures that bring us back to our origins. Buying a vinyl record, going to a concert without knowing anything about the artist, or reading a printed magazine should be just as necessary as taking half an hour each day to have a coffee and organize your morning. That small gesture, so unusual for me, gave me back the desire to return to those things that make you slow down, even if only for a few moments.

Rock Bottom has not only been a breath of encouragement or a "I trust you" for me, it has been the key to feeling once again that things made with love and from within are worth it. That is why I would love to keep receiving, year after year, a package that smells like a new book and to rediscover, the way we used to, what lies behind the people who truly do things the right way.

SPOTIFILM

BY TALI CARRETO



What a great and delightful surprise it was to suddenly — or rather, trumpet-blast suddenly — hear the unmistakable voice of Raphael right at the climax of “Fallout.” The creative duo behind this outstanding adaptation of the video game, Lisa Joy and Jonathan Nolan, along with their music supervisor Trygge Toven, with whom they had already collaborated on that other marvel titled “Westworld”, had already given us more than one musical treat in this series.

With a soundtrack sprinkled with vintage sounds and charming oldies gems, across its two seasons so far we had heard songs by Elvis Presley, Nat King Cole, Betty Hutton, Glenn Miller, Dinah Washington, or the now largely forgotten The Ink Spots, to whom we even dedicated a Spotifilm not too many issues ago in this very magazine of yours. But no one could have imagined that, for a moment, they would tune away from the all-American radio dial and slip into such a glorious soundtrack a reference no less illustrious yet one hundred percent Spanish: “Balada de la Trompeta” by the aforementioned Raphael, a song the immortal singer from Jaén popularized in 1970 in the film “Sin un adiós” by Vicente Escrivá — co-starring, mind you, the American actress Lesley-Anne Down, yes, the one from “North and South!” — and which forty years later Álex de la Iglesia revived and turned into the leitmotif of his film “Balada triste de trompeta”.

But is “Balada de la Trompeta” really a one hundred percent Spanish song? We regret to inform you, dear patriots, that it is not. It is in fact a version of a piece composed by Franco Pisano and lyricist Ben Molar back in 1961. Franco, brother of fellow composer Berto and best known for writing hits for Mina, was a regular presence in the credits of Italian B-movies: the soundtracks for such varied titles as “Superargo, el hombre enmascarado”, “Destino: Estambul 68”, “Goldaface”, “Las tentaciones de Enriqueta”, and “Virgo, Tauro y Capricornio” bear his signature.

His “Ballata della Tromba”, a piece dedicated to Chet Baker, achieved immense success thanks to the hands and lungs of trumpeter Nini Rosso, who included it on his debut album and sold no less than one million copies. The gifted Turin-born instrumentalist also flirted with cinema, either composing soundtracks for films such as “A cavallo della tigre” by Luigi Comencini or “Soldati e Caporali”, one of the many comedies starring Franco and Ciccio, the comic duo formed by Franco Franchi and Ciccio Ingrassia, or making guest appearances alongside stars of the day such as Rita Pavone or Gianni Morandi.

Yet beyond “Ballata della Tromba”, his greatest success was undoubtedly “Il Silenzio”, a version of a traditional taps melody used in U.S. military memorials and funerals, which Rosso transformed into a bestseller by accompanying his trumpet with a spoken recitation that simulated a love letter from a soldier to his sweetheart. The move paid off handsomely: from the one million copies of his previous ballad, he leapt to selling more than ten million records.

It was, however, the song that concerns us here that crossed from its native Italy to Spain. We first received it through Los Cinco Latinos, the Argentine group led by Estela Raval, who even appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show and shared bills with Frank Sinatra and The Platters, no small feat. The group, a true vocal powerhouse, included this version on their 1962 album “Los fabulosos Cinco Latinos”, under the prestigious Columbia label, turning their “Balada de la Trompeta” into their biggest hit.

Later came covers by Tina y Tesa, the sixties answer to the Hermanas Fleta who had triumphed in the 1950s, who featured the song on their debut EP alongside other ye-yé delights such as “Lección de Twist” and “Tómbola”, and by a still up-and-coming Salomé, years before she would win Eurovision with “Viva cantando”.

But without any doubt, “Balada de la Trompeta” will forever remain etched in our memory in the voice, as melodramatic as it was inspired, of the Niño de Linares, our Raphael. Its inclusion in “Fallout”, and at such a pivotal moment, should open the door of international productions to the immense, varied, and spectacular catalogue of Spanish music, beyond the selections previously rescued by Tarantino with Lole y Manuel or Los Bravos. Take out your notebooks and pay close attention, Hollywood music supervisors.

091

“The fact that, at our age, in 2026, so many years after we started, we’re still recording albums might look like a mirage to an outside observer”.

José Ignacio Lapido

091 are back. They’re returning to life as a working band, releasing a new album and announcing a tour. Since that distant 1984, when they released their debut “Cementerio de automóviles”, the Granada-based band’s career has had it all: line-up changes, label problems, complicated productions, a connection with Joe Strummer, countless memorable songs… and even a death and a resurrection twenty years later, like Lazarus in Bethany. After that comeback, they were stunned by the overwhelming reception and, at the same time, compelled to go back into the studio and resume activity as a band. That led to 2019’s “La otra vida”, which opened with the line “I’ve come to finish what I started”, almost as if their subconscious was giving them away. It felt like they were destined to complete unfinished business, to achieve the recognition and status they perhaps didn’t fully receive before their split in 1996.



And against all odds, especially for the skeptics, possibly including themselves, 091 have managed to regain the pulse and drive they need as a band. José Ignacio Lapido in particular, but also José Antonio García, kept their solo careers going, so they've remained in enviable shape. In fact, Lapido's solo discography now equals 091's in number. Just two years ago he released one of his finest solo works, "A primera sangre" (Pentatonia Records), and now, in 2026, alongside José Antonio, Tacho and Jacinto, they've delivered one of their best albums to date.

Yes, you read that right. In 2026, 091 have written one of their strongest records. "Espejismo Nº 9" is an album recorded slowly and carefully, without rush, without the weight they felt with "La otra vida". The songs flowed organically; they were allowed to grow naturally, shaped by the craftsmanship of a band carrying the legacy of one of the greatest rock groups this country has produced.

With the right production from Raúl Bernal, tracks like "Algo parecido a un sueño", "Nadie quiere oír tu llanto", "No tiene sentido escapar" and the beautiful gem "Ven vestida de nube" pushed 091 to the top of the vinyl sales charts in Spain during its first week. Their recent Madrid concert has also received glowing reviews.

We spoke with José Ignacio about this mirage, about songs, about history, and about everything in between. It's always a pleasure talking to him, but this time felt even more special. You don't get to spend nearly two hours talking to someone you admire every day, someone who speaks to you like you've known each other forever, and who even gets emotional when you tell him how deeply some of his songs have affected you. Sometimes, life isn't so bad.

Hi José Ignacio, how are you?
Very well, Javi. And you?

Good, though we're under an orange weather alert here in Andalucía. (The interview took place just before the torrential rains that hit much of the region.)
We've got an orange alert here tomorrow all day. They've suspended classes. You're in Jerez, right? You've had quite a run of heavy rain.

Yes, I'm in Jerez. We've had more than enough rain. Funny enough, last year we were chatting on WhatsApp the day after the big storm, because we had one here too, and it just happened to coincide with us talking.
That's right. My son had an exam at university and it's been canceled. My other son, Nacho, works at the university and same thing. We're heading to Madrid at dawn, so we'll get our share of it too.

If you're leaving at dawn, I assume you're driving.
We're going by van, because there are no trains after the accident.

Right, of course. No joke.
Connections from Granada to Madrid used to go via Jaén and Linares-Baeza, which was more direct. Since they built the high-speed line there's a bottleneck near Antequera.

Don't complain, at least you have high-speed rail.
Well, Granada's "high-speed" is high-speed in name only. From Madrid to Antequera, yes. From Antequera to Granada, the trains crawl.

Quiet, the other day I went to Granada for the weekend. I took the train, like a student: Jerez to Seville, change there, then another train. Same thing on the way back. And it was your fault, because I went to see you at Zaidín.
Oh, you were at Zaidín? That's quite a trip you made.

It was fun, but at my age it's not quite as exciting anymore. First of all, thanks for doing this, I know you prefer written questionnaires.
Well, questionnaires are more reflective, but I understand journalists prefer face-to-face. I always give the option.

Now that we were talking about the storms, I remembered you used to write a newspaper column…
Grupo Joly was founded in Cádiz, and Granada Hoy belonged to that group, which is where I wrote. I did a weekly column for twelve years, from around 2002 or 2003 until 2016.

Do you miss having that space to talk about everything that's happening now?
Sometimes the hardest part wasn't writing the column, but finding the topic. There were weeks when I'd think, what do I write about? It was frustrating, because often it felt like the same issue over and over. In politics, things repeat themselves, and you can't just rewrite the same column changing four lines.

I feel something similar with editorials. Every couple of months I have to write one and it's hard to find something original.
Right now there are plenty of topics. But if you write about Trump one week, you can't write about Trump again the next, even though he gives you endless material.

He definitely does.
Especially in national politics, which is what I covered. My first columns coincided with the moment when Aznar named Rajoy his successor, or maybe it was when Zapatero came in. I saw several of them go by. But avoiding repetition was difficult.

> ***The recording stories of 091 could create a whole literary genre, somewhere between horror and epic, especially in the eighties . This time we came in with a lot of miles behind us.***

Do you ever feel the urge to comment on the current situation?
I do miss it. Sometimes I read the news and switch into columnist mode, thinking, there's something here, you can sharpen this angle. With the way the world is now, I'm not even sure whether "surreal" or "pathetic" is the right word.

Or "histrionic".
You can find many adjectives for the current global situation. Sometimes I imagine how I'd approach certain topics. But I'm fine as I am now.

This is the first time you're juggling your solo career and the band at the same time, right? How are you handling it?
It's happened before.

Well, since the last album you've had to alternate between 091 and your solo career.
Actually, 091 didn't exist when I started out solo. I adapted to that situation. I began my solo career in 1999. We'd split three years earlier, and twenty years went by. At one point I had almost more solo albums than I'd recorded with the band.

So your focus was entirely on your solo work.
Exactly. Then the twentieth anniversary tour of "Maniobra de resurrección" came up, and that year I put my solo career on hold because we ended up playing a huge number of shows. What was meant to be something small became a massive tour, large venues, reissues and remasters. It grew bigger than expected, and my solo work was parked. There was no intention of continuing as a band, it was just an anniversary celebration. But since it went so well, your mind starts turning things over. After that, in 2017, I released "El alma dormida".

Then you toured that album, and soon after started planning the next move with 091, and later recorded "A primera sangre" as a solo artist.

Yes, we alternated. José Antonio has done the same.

So this is really the first time you're managing both in parallel like this.
Yes, you're right. For example, last Saturday I was playing in Linares with Víctor, and at the same time we're finishing rehearsals for the 091 show in Madrid. Keeping two repertoires in your head at once is a bit of a mental shuffle, but I've gotten used to placing each one in a different part of my brain. This year we'll probably focus more on 091 and my solo work will be plan B. But once the noise around the new album settles, I'll go back to doing something solo again. You always find a way to move both forward.

Let's talk about the new album. It's inevitable to compare. I liked "La otra vida", but this one feels more natural to me. The level of the songs is incredibly high. It sounds more organic. Do you see differences?
I haven't really compared them. Once I finish an album, I rarely go back and listen to it in depth, except for technical reasons. The songs stay in my head, but I don't usually revisit past work. Calling this one more organic is accurate, because that was our intention. We worked on the songs with Raúl Bernal and wanted it to sound like a band playing, with minimal artifice. Every record involves technical treatment, but you can decide how much processing there is. We were looking for a natural, warm sound, leaving space between instruments. That's fundamental. Over the years you understand that silence matters. At first you want to fill everything, what they call horror vacui, but adding more doesn't mean it sounds better.

That's true.
When you record, you learn that songs need to breathe. If you fill the stereo spectrum with too many guitars, nothing is heard clearly. Sometimes it works better to have one guitar on one side and a piano on the other. The idea of silence within a recording is key. I think this album breathes. We recorded at El Cobertizo, Carlos Díaz's studio, where I've worked before, with Raúl producing. Then it was mastered by Mario Alberni at Kadifornia Mastering, down your way, in El Puerto de Santa María.

Do you think the feeling of having reunited after more than twenty years influenced the recording? Now that you've regained chemistry and momentum as a band, does that show in the studio?
Of course it shows. Since we came back in 2016 we've played a lot. Keep in mind that Jacinto and Tacho had been away from a professional routine for some time. Tacho played occasionally with Mama Baker, but not consistently. He was more focused on audiovisual work, short films, scripts. Jacinto had also put the bass in the background. For them, it wasn't just returning to 091, it was returning to a professional level of commitment. They were surely playing at home, but that's not the same as maintaining a rhythm of constant rehearsals and shows. José Antonio and I never stopped, but in their case it's noticeable. It's like an athlete who trains every day versus one who doesn't.

As a listener, I think you can tell. This record sounds more road-tested. "La otra vida" felt more restrained. Here there's more mileage, more years together. The producer change probably helped too. The previous one was produced by Frandol and this one by Raúl Bernal. Why did you choose him?
He produced "A primera sangre" for me. We chose him because he's one of us, but we also needed an external perspective. We considered bringing someone from outside, but choosing a producer can be complicated. You're going to spend a lot of time with that person. They might have an amazing résumé, but you don't know them, and maybe you don't click. I mean, I'm sure all producers are good people…

Not all of them are Phil Spector pointing a gun at you…
Exactly… And you also don't really know what their exact role was on the records you admire. This guy did such-and-such on a Primal Scream album, or Elliott Smith… but what did he actually do? Sometimes the real weight is carried by the engineer. In the US those roles are very clearly defined: one records, another mixes, someone handles drums, someone else guitars. So you don't always know what the producer really contributed. In the end we thought: we know what Raúl brings. He has great taste, experience, he's our friend, he plays piano and organ and knows what he's doing. And we wanted a calm recording process.

That calmness comes through.
Another factor is that we didn't record the album all at once. We didn't lock ourselves in for fifteen days to do everything. We recorded songs as they were finished. Before Christmas 2024, imagine how long we've been at this, we already had two songs. We went into the studio and recorded them. A few months later we had three more, so we recorded and mixed them straight away. That allowed us to evaluate as we went. We didn't have to wait until the end to hear what we'd done. We had two songs and said, let's see how they sound. Then three more, same thing. It's been a very serene, enjoyable recording, like we hadn't had in a long time. No technical setbacks.

Or maybe like you've almost never had, because your recording history could fill a book.
The recording stories of 091 could create a whole literary genre, somewhere between horror and epic, especially in the eighties. This time we came in with a lot of miles behind us.

Did you feel the knife-edge pressure in the lyrics this time, or were you more relaxed?
No, interestingly I had all the lyrics written before we entered the studio. José Antonio especially appreciated that. Many classics in our repertoire were written at the last minute, with everyone waiting in the studio and me outside finishing the lyrics.

I remember one of them was "Qué fue del siglo XX".
There were several.

I remember José Antonio telling me, half in awe, this guy suddenly shows up and in no time hands me an incredible lyric, I don't know how he does it.
Working under pressure is a foolproof system, but eventually it can give you a heart attack. Back then we recorded in Madrid, with tight budgets and fixed days. You had to finish and go back. There was no room to extend the session. This time we came in with the lyrics ready. José Antonio could sing more calmly.

You can hear that.
He had time to internalize the words. It's not just reading four lines and delivering them. Interpretation requires understanding what the words mean, the prosody of each phrase. A relaxed recording helped him a lot.

No knives involved.
All those circumstances end up shaping how the listener perceives the final result, like the feeling you described earlier.

There's something almost cinematic about Raúl's story. A guy who used to email you from Murcia saying he played keyboards and would love to collaborate, and years later he ends up producing a 091 album.
It's a bit like a Christmas tale, like something out of a Frank Capra film, "It's a Wonderful Life". He used to write to me and I'd tell him this wasn't the fairy tale it might seem from the outside, that I couldn't promise him anything. But thanks to his persistence and talent he's ended up producing a 091 album and touring with Quique González. He's done great things in music.

Why the album title? I get the "9", since it's your ninth record, but "mirage"… is it about appearance? Plato had the cave, Nietzsche said a mirage isn't just an error to correct but an inevitable condition of life. Existentialism talks about mirage as an escape from the responsibility of existing.

Alejandro Jodorowsky would say it's a message from the unconscious.
After all that, I'm speechless. The title wasn't my idea. Naming an album once it's finished is always difficult. You worry you might choose a title that weakens the work. We were in that agony, the knife shining again, when Jacinto Ríos suggested picking up a sequence. On "El baile de la desesperación" there was a song called "Espejismo número siete", with a somewhat psychedelic, surreal lyric. Dylan also did that numbering thing. Then the last single we released before the breakup was "Un hombre con suerte", and its B-side was a song I still play solo. It felt like a continuation, even though the lyrics weren't related, also a bit surreal, a bit paranoid, like an old blind-ballad romance. I called it "Espejismo número ocho". Since this was our ninth studio album, Jacinto suggested closing the series with "Espejismo número nueve". It made sense. And as you say, mirage can mean many things. The fact that, at our age, in 2026, so many years after we started, we're still recording albums might look like a mirage to an outside observer. Back in 1982, when it all began, 2026 sounded like science fiction, like "Star Wars", flying cars, "Blade Runner", Kubrick… we never imagined we'd still be making records this far into the future.

Or filling venues.
That too. But our lyrics have always lived in that duality between reality and dream, between wakefulness and the surreal. The title felt evocative, and it closed the seven, eight, nine sequence. And the artwork by Miguel Navia aligned perfectly with that idea, an urban mirage.

It has a strong film noir vibe.
Yes, that's Navia's style. I didn't know him personally, but I loved his graphic novel work. We were short on time again and I suggested him without knowing much beyond that he was from Madrid. We contacted him and he loved the idea, said he'd never done album artwork before. We sent him the songs, he liked them, and I wanted that aesthetic. He draws the night, buildings, streets, solitary characters. It fit our imaginary micro-world.

At first it surprised me, but I'll reserve judgment until I have the vinyl.
It might surprise you, but it's a work of art. When you open the sleeve, the front and back covers form a continuous narrative, and inside there's another scene. I congratulated him warmly. I think he was very happy with the result.

Let's talk songs. "Piezas de desguace" is fantastic, with an incredible melody.
Very American in spirit. I don't compose thinking "this will sound American or British". I look for a melody I like and lyrics with some literary weight. But this one has that sweet melody leaning toward folk rock and American pop rock.

It brings to mind John Mellencamp.
Yes, Tom Petty, a bit of The Jayhawks in the mix. That blend of acoustic and electric with a long tradition among artists I admire. The lyrics reflect on the passage of time. At first listen it might seem bitter, but I don't think it is. There's hope in there too.

"Nadie quiere oír tu llanto" has a very punchy chorus.
It's built around three short stories, each with a named character. My initial idea was to have four stories, each named after one of the four evangelists. But structurally there were only three verses, and adding a fourth would have distorted the song, so I changed the names. It has strong punk rock roots.

That's José Antonio's favorite side of things.
Yes. It's got a clear melody and vibrant guitars.

"No tiene sentido escapar" was the first single and it's stunning. I can't get lines like "The giant tells the moon, I can almost touch you" or "The feeling of having lived more than one life is real" out of my head. It's amazing you keep writing lyrics like this.
Thank you, Javi.

No, thank you.
It's one of those songs that comes out and you just know it'll go far. Some songs you're unsure about, maybe they need a bridge or a riff. This one came naturally. Beyond the instrumental details, the structure and melody were there from the start.

Those are the songs that sound fresh.
Exactly. You think, damn, this one turned out good. Like picking an apple from a basket and it's perfect. You play it twice and it feels finished. Of course you tweak things, whether it starts with a riff or drums or bass. But the core structure, chords, melody, harmonies were there from day one.

And the lyrics?
They flowed easily too, like most of the album. And yes, I especially like that image of the giant telling the moon he can almost touch it. It might sound bad to say it myself, but I think it turned out beautifully. There's a play between determinism and free will in there.

Let's talk about "Ven vestida de nube". I have to admit, I get goosebumps just mentioning it. I think it's one of the most incredible songs you've ever written, one of the most incredible you've ever recorded. You've made nine albums, how many songs have you written by now? The fact that you can still move me like this is unbelievable. Some people liked it less because it's slower, maybe, but I think it's stunning. The lyrics are beautiful. José Antonio sings it amazingly. I don't know how he keeps his voice in that shape, maybe it's the dry Granada cold, or the calicasas, who knows. Sorry if I'm flattering you a bit, but it deserves it.

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No, no… I get emotional too… especially knowing it's coming from someone like you, someone who really knows music and rock. Hearing something like that about your work moves me deeply. I'm the one who should be thanking you. The truth is, this was one of the last songs I wrote for the album. I felt something was missing, something at a slower tempo. I like albums to have variety: fast songs, mid-tempo, and at least one slower one. We didn't really have that. There was the blues track, but you can't call that slow, because blues carries electric intensity.

You mean "Dormir con un ojo abierto", the more bluesy one.
Exactly. In this case I was looking for something calmer, along the lines of older songs of ours like "Corazón malherido" or "Un cielo color vino", rooted in the great soul ballads of the sixties. In fact, the riff came from playing around with some Steve Cropper-style ideas. He passed away recently, and it almost coincided with the single's release. I thought, what a bitter coincidence.

We're talking about a giant. Someone who wrote and played historic material at Stax with Otis Redding and so many others.
Exactly. From there, like the previous one, the song almost wrote itself. You start with a note and your hand just follows. It's not intellectual, your head guides your hand to the next chord so the melody works. I did consciously set out to write something calm. But calm songs often carry more emotional intensity than fast ones, and this is one of those.

Sometimes you don't need to shout louder to blow someone away, you just have to go deeper. "Come dressed as a cloud and



leave rain as you pass" is just beautiful. The video is very good too. It was made with AI, right?
Yes, it was made with AI, but directed by Fernando Muñoz from Producciones Z. He did the cover of our previous album and my solo record "A primera sangre". He's done my lyric videos too. He's worked with us for years. AI was used as a tool, but it's not just pressing a button. There's work behind it: parameters, artistic judgment, and it was based on his own illustrations. AI is an instrument with risks and advantages. In this case it allowed us to do something that, with a traditional animation team, would have been financially impossible. It would have cost a fortune. The real issue with AI is something else. The other day I read that thousands and thousands of songs are uploaded to streaming platforms every day worldwide, and about twenty percent are entirely AI-generated: voice, lyrics, everything.

Let me tell you something. I recorded an album at home purely for pleasure, knowing I wouldn't make money from it. It took me seven years. I have a friend who generated twenty songs in a few minutes with an AI app and uploaded them to platforms to see if he could make money. When I talk to him, it feels like we live in different universes. I talk from an artistic perspective, and he doesn't get it at all. It's frustrating.
Do you know what's even more frustrating? That people don't care. If someone wants to get rich doing that, fine, that's their choice. But you look at the numbers and those songs get thousands, even millions of streams. It's like this whole wave of so-called urban artists, we could debate that label, because all music is urban if you think about it. Their audience doesn't care whether they perform live with musicians. That's not a value for that crowd. They see a guy with a microphone, auto-tune, no musicians on stage, and that's enough.

Sometimes not even that, sometimes the voice is pre-recorded too.
In the seventies or eighties, if an artist had gone on stage like that, they would have been booed. If there was even a hint of playback, it was a scandal, it made the press. Now there are no musicians on stage, everything is pre-recorded, you press play, and who knows if the guy is even singing.

Milli Vanilli wouldn't have been a scandal today.
Not at all. They'd have been normal. Playing an instrument or singing no longer holds the value it used to. Opera singers, tenors, having a great voice used to be a value in itself. That's faded into the background.

For certain audiences.
For much of that audience it's completely unnecessary that the artist sings or plays. And that brings us back to AI. People don't care whether it's one thing or another. They just want a melody that fits their parameters of fashion, something they can dance to or upload to TikTok. We're facing a complete paradigm shift, not just because of those who make it, but because of those who consume it.

Sticking with "Ven vestida de nube", there's a female voice on it. Looking at the credits, I see it's Paulina del Carmen, who, correct me if I'm wrong, was in Las Dianas. How did that collaboration come about?
Raúl Bernal brought her in. She was a young singer he knew from his academy, because Raúl runs a music school for both young people and adults. He told us, "I know a girl who sings really well." And she was already working professionally, not an amateur. We loved what she did. It was exactly what we wanted, a subtle female texture in the background.

Exactly, it's about texture. That subtlety adds to the velvety feel of the song. About "Dormir con un ojo abierto", you said earlier it has a blues touch.
Blues is part of my musical DNA.

I'm not going to ask about the blues album, don't worry.
This one would have fit perfectly on that album, or "Malos pensamientos" from my previous solo record. Whenever inspiration behaves itself, I like to include a brushstroke of blues roots. Blues allows me to write stories that feel outside reality but also inside it. There's a lot of irony in this one, and a darker side of the mind. It's the kind of song that sounds good from the first rehearsal with the band.

So a lot of them came out quickly, from what I gather.
Not exactly. Some songs come quickly as compositions, others take shape when the full band plays them together.

To close the album, "Puede que el tiempo" has a very psychedelic feel, very Beatles-esque.
It definitely has that psychedelic sound. Some people have said it reminds them of Spanish

60s pop, those elongated harmonies like Los Brincos or Los Ángeles used to do. It has that final instrumental section that wasn't fully improvised, but almost. We had a bunch of extra bars to fill and didn't know what to do with them. We debated whether to cut it abruptly or fade it out in the old style. I started layering guitars and it ended up sounding more like The Allman Brothers Band than anything else, with doubled guitars.

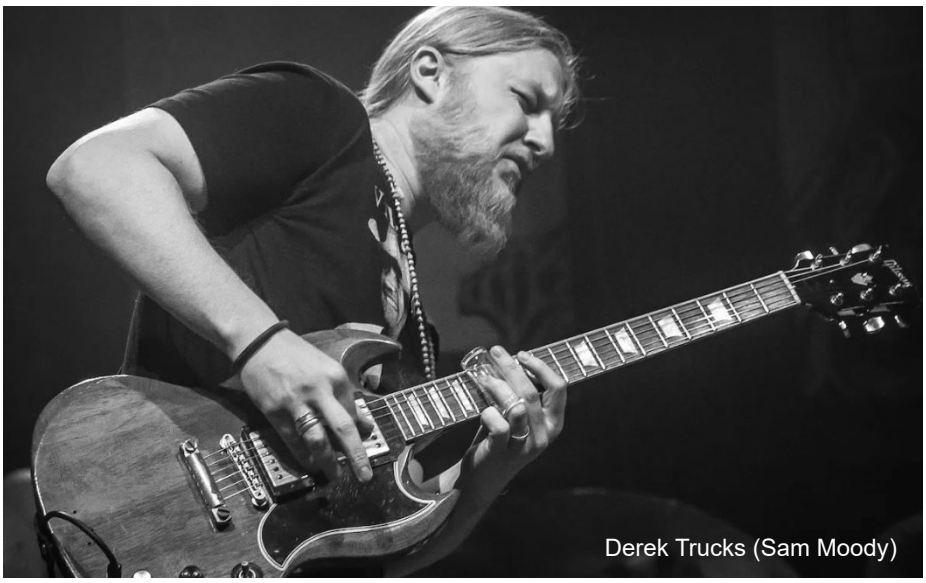
If you like The Allman Brothers, you should listen to Duane Betts' latest record, Dickey Betts' son. It's pure Allman Brothers spirit.
I'll write it down. His father was a beast. Dickey Betts was one of the great guitarists of his era, and a songwriter too. Many Allman classics were his. Duane Allman was amazing as well. Everyone who passed through that band was outstanding. Think of Warren Haynes. Right now my favorite is Derek Trucks, who was in one of the later lineups. And with his wife, Susan Tedeschi, the Tedeschi Trucks Band. If you like slide guitar, Derek Trucks is incredible. He's not flashy for the sake of it. He's a guitarist with soul.

I saw you at Zaidín, as I mentioned earlier. We were slightly impaired thanks to calicasas.
That stuff hits hard.

My friend Jesús is to blame. He's a big fan of calicasas, and he's two meters tall. You know them, right?
Yes, of course. But I haven't touched that in years. It knocks you back.

That Zaidín show was excellent. You were in great shape. Have you been playing that much? The previous album's tour was cut short by COVID.
Yes. It was a disaster for everyone, especially because of the human losses. Many artistic careers were disrupted, especially those planning to release albums in March 2020. We managed to play a few shows because we released in October 2019, but concerts scheduled for March and April had to be canceled. In fact, we canceled before the official lockdown because we saw what was coming. Later on things reopened slightly, with reduced capacity, seated audiences. I did some solo theater shows with distancing. But to answer your question, yes, we rehearsed a lot. That Zaidín show wasn't Víctor Sánchez's first with us, but we'd put in serious rehearsal time.

Víctor replaced your brother as second guitarist. But you sounded very, very tight.
Yes, several people have told me we sounded great that night.


Derek Trucks (Sam Moody)

And it had that old-school festival vibe, free entry, big atmosphere.
It's the oldest festival in Spain and it's always been free. They want to keep it that way.

On the album, two recurring elements in your lyrics appear again: gin and playing cards.
I drank gin for many years. It was my usual drink. But I stopped drinking spirits a long time ago, much to my liver's relief. As for cards, I don't play anymore, but I've had great times playing. They carry a powerful image. Chance, fate, the role of randomness in our lives, it's something that works very well symbolically and literarily. Dice, cards, they're strong imagery.

The Grammy Awards were handed out this weekend, and one of the major awards went to a man named Bad Bunny, who openly admits he can't sing. Do we keep faith in rock and roll, or do we let it die? Do we retreat to the sewers, as Stevie Van Zandt once said?
We're like guerrilla warfare. When the Romans conquered territories, Viriato was still there harassing the legions. He couldn't confront such a massive war machine head-on, so he used guerrilla tactics. But honestly, analyzing those kinds of artistic proposals only leads to melancholy, to banging your head against a wall. They feel so alien to me that I don't even engage. It would be a waste of time. It's like something outside my culture and my way of seeing the world. I can't really judge it either, because I don't know it deeply. Just the sing-song tone of the voice irritates me enough to stop listening. Not just him, but others in that lane.

I've listened to some Rosalía, out of curiosity. It's a parallel universe that doesn't intersect with mine.
The idea that you have to be open to every new trend… no, not necessarily. I don't see anything positive in forcing that. And Rosalía isn't the same as Bad Bunny.

Rosalía has talent, I won't deny that. But the format… you listen to "Motomami" and it's like a thousand sound engineers mixing invented words. It's like Miley Cyrus. She sings incredibly well, but her albums don't interest me. Then she does a folk session with amazing covers and you're blown away, but her own records don't move me.
Miley Cyrus has an incredible voice. And take Lady Gaga. I don't like her music, but I've heard her sing Metallica, The Rolling Stones, "Black Dog" by Led Zeppelin, and it's astonishing. Rosalía's voice is fantastic. I love her voice. But "Motomami" doesn't connect with me. As for Bad Bunny, I've barely heard half a song.

That's already a lot.
I don't want to dwell on it. For those of us who grew up with the culture of black roots music, soul, blues, early 50s rock and roll, and everything that came in the 60s with Dylan and The Beatles, all that's left is to keep writing good songs and playing good concerts. Culture moves like a pendulum. In the early 80s rockabilly came back with Stray Cats and others. No one believed in it anymore. It seemed like a relic of the 50s.

Now you have someone like La Perra Blanco, a young woman who plays guitar incredibly well and has deep musical knowledge.
Yes, I've seen her. She plays incredibly well.

She represents what I always say: you have to keep faith in rock and roll.
She must be young, right?

Under thirty, I think.
Then there's hope. Maybe she didn't grow up immersed in that sound. Maybe one day she heard Carl Perkins and got hooked. Now you have access to endless videos and material. I had to learn the pentatonic scale alone at home.

Now you have YouTube tutorials for everything.
Exactly. Talent still matters. That gives you hope. Not that rock will ever regain the cultural centrality it had in the 60s and 70s. Back then it wasn't just music, it shaped Western culture. That won't return.

You and I might have a generational disagreement. I think the 90s were the last major cultural revolution in music.
Grunge and all that? Do you really think so?

Yes. It tried to change things, but it eventually dissolved.
I've been buying records since the early 60s, I was just a kid. I've read a lot about the history of popular culture. The way rock and pop, from Elvis, The Beatles and Dylan onward, that holy trinity, shaped broader culture, interacting with cinema, painting, literature… that didn't happen in the 90s in the same way. The decline really began in the 80s, though there were flashes afterward.

You've always joked that Michael Jackson was to blame.
I usually blame the success of the "Thriller" video in 1982. It coincided with punk's decline, which for me was the last great explosion. After that there were bands I loved, R.E.M., The Long Ryders, The Smithereens, The Godfathers. But the cultural weight rock had up until punk has never returned.

I partly disagree with you about the 90s. In my view, that was the last great musical-cultural flare-up. I lived through that era thinking rock was going to be the engine that would change things. But then Kurt kills himself, drugs take their toll, many bands age too fast, something breaks. And the very last movement, for me, was the late-90s Scandinavian scene, Gluecifer, Turbonegro, The Hellacopters… After that, I can't really point to anything else.
There's a big paradox. The period when rock artists made the most money wasn't the 60s or 70s, but the 80s, 90s and 2000s. That's when bands started earning serious money. I'm sure The Rolling Stones or AC/DC have made far more since then. They had better contracts, ownership of their catalogues. In the 60s and 70s many of them were being ripped off. The money involved now with mega-tours by U2 or Metallica is on another scale. They've made many more millions than artists did back then. But in terms of cultural impact… when Dylan was a countercultural figurehead, when the San Francisco scene was happening, some books describe that period as the golden age of Western culture in the second half of the twentieth century.

I was going to ask if you'd seen the Dylan film, but maybe it's better if you recommend some books about that era.
There's one about The Beatles that actually covers much more. It's called "Revolution in the Head" by Ian MacDonald. It's out of print. He committed suicide. It analyzes The Beatles' work but connects it to the broader culture of the time. It's a magnificent essay. Another classic is "Awopbopaloobop Alopbamboom: A History of Pop Music" by Nik Cohn, written almost in real time in the late 60s. It's full of contemporary judgments that can seem funny now, but he was writing as events were unfolding. And then there's "The Sound of the City" by Charlie Gillett, in two volumes. If you want to understand the origins of rock from the 50s onward, the record companies, the whole ecosystem, it's incredibly detailed.

B.B. King's autobiography is also worth reading. It's not just about his life, but about the sociocultural context in which blues developed, how cities grew, how musicians interacted, including Ike Turner. It shows how important Ike Turner was, even if he was a bastard.
Of course. He was one of the founding fathers of rock and roll.

I highly recommend it, especially the first half. Like with Aretha Franklin's biography, once it reaches the 80s it loses some interest, but the early part, with all its historical context, is fantastic.
That often happens with biographies. Once they reach the modern era, they interest me less. If I read Eric Clapton's biography, I'm mostly focused on the 60s.

Another one I recommend is the recent book by Javier Cosmen about Ronnie Lane, "Ronnie Lane. OOH LA LA! Vida y obra de un (Small) Faces". If you like that era, those bands, The Small Faces, The Faces, Slim Chance, Humble Pie, it's wonderful.
Ronnie Lane always seemed like a good guy. He had a degenerative illness, didn't he?

Yes, multiple sclerosis.
He was very loved among London musicians. He sang many Faces songs, standing next to Rod Stewart. That took courage.

He was a fascinating character. The book connects different movements and scenes, like the one you mentioned about The Beatles. It links the British Invasion, Howlin' Wolf recording in England, tours with bands like Free. And Ronnie Lane's life was unusual, he even wanted to live like a gypsy in Wales.
Ron Wood was partly from a Romani background too, those London gypsies who lived on boats along the canals.

José Ignacio, as always, it's been a pleasure.
Thank you for your attention.

Javistone





José Antonio García

"Seguimos siendo fieles a nuestros principios, seguimos teniendo la misma actitud y las mismas ganas de subirnos a un escenario"

In 2026, 091 release their ninth album, "Espejismo Nº9", a record that for many already ranks among the most solid works in a career marked by silence, comebacks, and resilience. After twenty years of inactivity, a "Maniobra de Resurrección", the pandemic, and several solo projects, the band worked without rushing, recording calmly and fine-tuning every detail. The result is a mature, cohesive album that remains faithful to their identity, with a production that enhances their sound without unnecessary embellishment. We spoke with José Antonio García about the passage of time, creative evolution, the voice as an emotional instrument, and that spirit of the eighties which, far from nostalgia, continues to beat with the same intensity in 2026.

"Espejismo Nº9" (Universal, 2026) is 091's ninth studio album in twenty-four years of musical activity. The statistic says you release an average of one album every two years and six months. Are the numbers lying? What conclusions can we draw from them?

Yes, the math works out to one album every two and a half years. But that's just what statistics say; real life is something else. We were inactive for twenty years. In 2016 we did the Maniobra de Resurrección tour and then released "La Otra Vida". Then the pandemic hit, which was another forced break, and we've also been balancing 091 with our solo careers. All of that has been a factor in stretching the time between albums.

I've read some reviews claiming this is your best album. Do you agree?

If they say this album is the best of our career, that's great by me. We've always tried to move forward and make sure the creative level is higher than on the previous record. We don't want to stay stuck in one era; we want to keep evolving as a band. We made this album more calmly, recording in sessions of two or three songs at a time. Everything was more relaxed. We had time to listen back carefully, without any kind of pressure, and in the end that shows in the result.

These 091 sound more mature and more settled than on "La Otra Vida" (Warner, 2019), a record that perhaps suffered from the pressure of being your comeback album. Was this time necessary for the "resurrection maneuver" to truly work?

Maybe. "La Otra Vida" carried a lot of emotional weight, since we were recording new material again after many years and we wanted to live up to our previous work. For me it's a very good record, one that has all the ingredients of any 091 album: variety, good songs and excellent lyrics.

You worked with Raúl Bernal as producer, keyboard player in Lapido's band. Is it a coincidence that this is precisely the album that sounds most similar to José Ignacio's solo work?

I don't know. If there are things that remind people of other stages, it's probably because in the end, we're the same people and we still have the same musical tastes. José Ignacio writes the songs, and if he didn't have a solo career this question wouldn't even exist. It's his way of writing, but 091 has its own identity because there are four of us, and if one of us weren't there, it wouldn't sound like 091 anymore. I don't think it's about sounding like anything in particular. Raúl has helped us a lot because he's an extraordinary musician and he knows the band very well; in fact, he played with us for a while. He brought that external perspective that artists usually miss.

Your voice sounds fantastic. Did you work hard on it?

It was recorded calmly and without forcing anything. It's the same voice, but we worked on it looking for a different treatment compared to other records. We didn't try to disguise it; we aimed for a natural voice, well placed and without tricks. Raúl did a fantastic job with it. Over the years you learn to measure things better, not to fight with the songs and to let the voice go where it needs to go.

You start the presentation tour in April. What's the best thing about getting on stage at sixty-four?

Well, I don't have to prove anything anymore. I go on stage to enjoy the songs and have a good time with the audience. I know when to push and when to hold back, I know who I

am, I know what I can't, and that allows me to enjoy the show much more.

> ***We've always wanted to make the best album possible, and we've always given the best of ourselves when entering the studio. If later someone thinks "Espejismo" is the best one, great, but for me it's like a big family with nine children.***

After more than half a lifetime dedicated to this, what expectations does 091 have for the release of this album?
That's something people will probably decide after some time has passed. We've always wanted to make the best album possible, and we've always given the best of ourselves when entering the studio. If later someone thinks "Espejismo" is the best one, great, but for me it's like a big family with nine children. You always love the youngest one a bit more because it's just been born, but you love the others just the same. What matters to us is that the album makes sense within our story and that we can defend it live.

What remains of the spirit of 091 from the eighties in your 2026 incarnation?
Almost everything. We're still faithful to our principles, we still have the same attitude and the same desire to get up on stage. I still feel that little jolt right before a concert starts. Back then we attracted an audience made up of very loyal young people, but with little purchasing power, lots of students and rock fans who discovered us through word of mouth. Seeing them now together, singing the songs, is proof that that spirit hasn't been left behind in nostalgia, but is still alive in 2026. Time teaches you how to take the blows without losing intensity.

You rightfully carry the status of a legend. Does that distinction take more from you than it gives?
The "legend" status was given to us by the press. We've simply stayed faithful to our principles our entire lives; we've never sold ourselves to trends. Our followers have given us a reward, and that is that, after more than twenty years in the shadows, with albums out of print and not being active, they were still there when we came back. And not only that, they were bringing their children to our concerts, making our songs, through word of mouth, reach a wider audience. For us, that's a great gift.

Guillermo Alvah



Raúl Bernal

"I always try to bring calm and a pure vision of the songs".



Raúl Bernal came to José Ignacio Lapido as a persistent keyboard player and ended up producing "Espejismo Nº9", the latest album by 091. His trajectory, almost novelistic, now culminates in a production that brings serenity, depth, and an essentialist approach to a band with legendary status. Without artifices or excess, Bernal has worked from the rehearsal room, refining structures and arrangements, seeking to let each song breathe with only what is strictly necessary. The result is a calm and organic sound, possibly one of the most solid in the band's discography. In this conversation he looks back on his role in the studio, his relationship with Lapido, and a way of understanding music rooted in respect, passion, and creative honesty.

First of all, thank you for speaking with us, Raúl. Let's begin at the beginning: how did the idea of you producing the album come about? I understand other names may have been considered, but you ended up taking the role. What did you feel you could bring to it? Producing a record by 091, a band rightfully labeled as legends, must carry weight, even if you're friends.

Honestly, I don't know whether other names were discussed. It all felt very natural. José Ignacio called me and said the band wanted to record and asked if I'd like to take on production duties. You never expect to produce a 091 album. Of course it's intimidating, because of who they are and what they mean. But we're friends, we know each other well, and it turned into a beautiful experience. I always try to bring calm, zero stress, and a clear vision of the songs, the sound, the arrangements. I like to start from the essentials and avoid overcrowding a record with unnecessary elements.

You previously produced "A primera sangre" by Lapido, which I personally consider José Ignacio's finest album. Part of that strength lies in the freshness and clarity of the production. How did you start producing in the first place?

I was already producing my own solo records and the projects I formed around my songs. Someone had to do it. I've always been fascinated by studio work, by sound, by the production of albums I admire. It began naturally. I've worked on many projects I'm proud of: Lapido, Luis Arronte, Chloé Bird, El Hombre Garabato, Jabier Dorado, Antonio Álvarez…

Why didn't they repeat with Frandol? Personally, I found that record slightly cold, perhaps because of the time apart or maybe because the production felt too polished. What's your take?

I played on that record as a musician. It went through many changes, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. It has strong songs. Beyond that, I honestly don't know.

When you approached this new record, how did you think about shaping its sound? Did the band give you any specific direction? Did you get involved only once the songs were written, or were you there from the early stages?

As I said, I focus on making songs work with the minimum necessary, no artifice. 091 are a band that naturally avoid excess, so I tried to enhance that quality. I started working with them in the rehearsal space, refining structures, arrangements, tones, adding and subtracting. It was hands-on from the ground up.

In one of my favorite tracks, not just on the album but in 091's entire catalog, "Ven vestida de nube", Paulina del Carmen provides backing vocals. I believe that was your suggestion. How did that come about?

Yes, it was my idea. I've known Paulina for years. She was once a student at my music academy, and even then I could see she would become an extraordinary singer and artist. And she has. She delivered a phenomenal performance, with remarkable professionalism and maturity.

Overall, how do you feel about the finished record? Is there anything you'd change? Any song left out that you would have liked included?

I think it's a great album, one that will be remembered in their career. The songwriting is of a very high level. When you've lived inside a record for so long, you inevitably feel there's always something you might adjust, but that's normal. What matters is

that listeners feel nothing is missing and recognize both the band and that added spark in this new chapter.

Your story with José Ignacio is almost cinematic. You wrote him emails years ago asking to collaborate, and he politely replied that his songs didn't need keyboards. Yet you persisted, eventually becoming an essential part of his band. He now says he can't imagine his songs without keyboards. You've played live with 091 and now produced their album. That kind of arc could inspire an HBO series. I see it as a lesson in perseverance.

José and I did meet in an unusual way. I contacted him more than twenty years ago and eventually ended up playing with him. Youthful boldness, I suppose. It wasn't confidence in my talent, I still struggle with that. I had faith in his songs and wanted to be part of them, to try to make them even better. I don't regret that decision. José is part of my family. I've learned a great deal from him and continue to do so. Having him close is a privilege.

Now the final question: what would you say to anyone who wants to make music, regardless of age or ambition? Sometimes I wonder what the point is. And then I realize art and music justify themselves.

I'd say respect it and take care of it. Take it seriously, whatever your goal. Creation is powerful. It changes you. I'm not great at giving advice, but for me the key is to approach it with respect, passion and knowledge.

Javistone

"Espejismo n.º 9"

091's new album is not a mirage, it's a miracle. No one could have imagined in 1996, when they said goodbye to the audience with their last two concerts in Maracena, that 30 years later we would witness a resurrection at the 20-year mark with a triumphant tour and two studio albums as strong as "La otra vida" (2019) and this new release. Almost seven years after the previous one, they present proof that what happened back then was not, paradoxically, a mirage, but confirmation that the band from Granada had truly begun a second youth in which urgency turns into elegance and fury into restrained anger, in keeping with their age and state of mind.

"Espejismo Nº 9" is ten songs produced with care, simplicity and good taste by Raúl Bernal, who also plays keyboards throughout the record, bringing a new, warmer sound to these mature Cero. Bernal knows them well and has found exactly what the band needs at this moment. Lapido wrote the songs in the second half of 2024 and recording took place in three stages between October of that year and July 2025. It was a slow and lengthy process, but a very satisfying one.

I've read critics saying this is 091's best album, which sounds exaggerated given the band's legacy, but it is certainly better than the also brilliant "La otra vida". It's hard to single out specific tracks because almost all of them could be singles. The quality of the songwriting is very high, both lyrically and musically, and it fits perfectly into the rest of their discography. The opening is unbeatable with "Algo parecido a un sueño", a measured rock song with references to their hometown, almost like a statement of intent. In general there are plenty of mid-tempo or slow songs, although there are exceptions such as the defiant "Nadie quiere oír tu llanto" (with beautiful backing vocals by Popi González) or my favorite, "Una revelación", a playful power pop track with references to Elvis, Stalin or Saint Teresa.

But what dominates the record is not high voltage. Beautiful songs such as the folky "Piezas de desguace", the catchy "Antes de que salga el sol", the delicate "Ven vestida de nube" or that new classic "No tiene sentido escapar" focus on beauty and slow-burning emotion, restrained, almost whispered. On "Los cantes de la sinrazón", Jacinto Ríos' bass stands out and the tempo rises slightly without going overboard, but these new Cero no longer shout; they seem calmer and wiser, as if returning from battle. They are still asking questions, but perhaps now they have some answers. Needless to say, Pitos is superb once again.

Perhaps the most different track on the album, and the one that reminds me most of Lapido's solo work, is "Dormir con un ojo abierto", a muddy blues with an irresistible chorus ("If you don't see the lightning, you'll hear the thunder, to the north lies doubt, to the south confusion, maybe you should sleep with one eye open"). Because yes, these new Cero seem calmer, but doubt, uncertainty and dreams remain the same refuge they once were.

The album closes with the psychedelic "Puede que el tiempo" (again with beautiful backing vocals from Popi), which gradually turns into Southern rock, perhaps a nod to other times as a doorway to a new future that we hope will continue. The feeling you're left with after listening to it is that every last detail has been carefully considered. From the compositions of the master; to Lapido's own performance, handling all the guitars;



the majestic voice of Pitos, with its lower registers; the outstanding work of Jacinto Ríos on bass and Tacho González on drums; the backing vocals of Popi and Paulina del Carmen; Raúl's production; and the cover art, a beautiful illustration by Miguel Navia, "Espejismo Nº 9" is an album created, conceived and performed with love, without rush, with craftsmanship and genius.

What remains now is to see how the new repertoire fits into the live shows. The first concert of this new tour (sold out at La Riviera) once again confirms that the event of their return has maintained massive interest in the band, and by including six of their new songs in the setlist, they prove that there isn't a single trace of nostalgia here. We're already looking forward to seeing it for ourselves in April.

Jorge Borondo

Resistance, Stories and a Whole Lot of Rock'n'Roll

By Andrés Herrera (Pájaro)



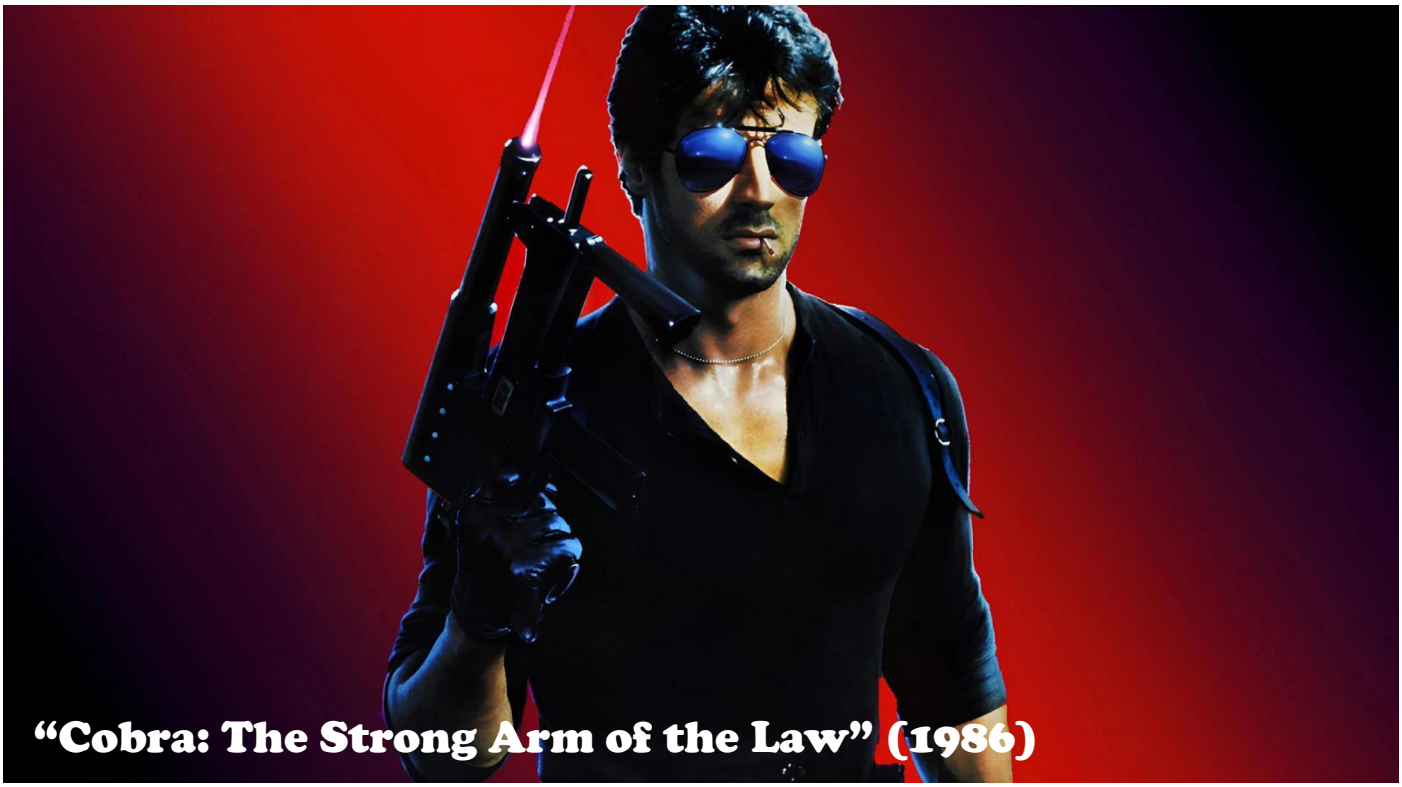
In these grey times, when it seems like they want to bury rock in the past and the world just carries on between reggaeton and feudal politics, it fills me with pride to see that none of that has been able to defeat the great power of rock'n'roll.

For me, it has been a real pleasure to be part of this madness and to be able to tell some of our stories. But above all, what I value most is having always been so well informed about the music I love thanks to this house. We are talking about a publication of impeccable quality, where the strength of its photography and the elegance of its design come together to support informative content of incalculable value for any rock lover. It is, quite simply, a piece of journalistic craftsmanship.

A thousand thanks to Javistone for steering this ship, and of course, it has been a privilege to share this journey with collaborators of the caliber of Tali Carreto, José Luis Crespo and the entire editorial team.

What truly makes Rock Bottom Magazine unique is its spirit: a commitment born from pure philanthropy, non-profit and driven by love for the art itself. An honest project that resists and shines with its own light. May it last for many, many years.

The Ninja's corner



"Cobra: The Strong Arm of the Law" (1986)

For our fiftieth issue, we're heading back four decades to a film that perfectly captures the spirit of the 1980s, a movie that breathes that decade in every frame. It left no one indifferent, loved and loathed in equal measure. We're talking about "Cobra", released in Spain under the subtitle "the strong arm of the law". One can't help wondering whether Santiago Segura ever took inspiration from that tagline.

At the time, Sylvester Stallone was riding high. He had just smashed box offices worldwide with "Rambo: First Blood Part II" and "Rocky IV", the latter released only weeks earlier to huge success. With that momentum behind him, Sly dusted off an old project and reshaped it into "Cobra". A couple of years earlier, he had been attached to star in "Beverly Hills Cop". He presented his version of the script, but the studio wanted something lighter, more comedic, less violent, as we eventually saw with Eddie Murphy. Stallone walked away, but he kept his draft, planning to revisit it when the time was right.

Two years later, "Cobra" hit theaters, directed by George P. Cosmatos, who had already worked with Stallone on "Rambo: First Blood Part II". Industry gossip at the time suggested Cosmatos only truly called the shots when Stallone wasn't on set, and that he treated supporting actors harshly. Stallone, operating at peak ego levels, cast his then-wife Brigitte Nielsen as the female lead. They had married just months before. The relationship didn't last long, reportedly due to Nielsen's on-set affairs. A former model who later ventured into pop and then into far less distinguished techno territory, she and Stallone were said to have kept to themselves during filming until producers stepped in.

This marked Stallone's first collaboration with Cannon Films, the 1980s studio synonymous with low-budget excess that somehow turned camp into box office gold. Warner Bros. co-produced. The following year, Stallone went all in with Cannon for "Over the Top", a commercial disappointment despite his hefty paycheck. "Cobra" itself grossed over $160 million, respectable by most standards, but not quite the mega-hit the studio had hoped for. Stallone initially conceived a 130-minute cut packed with graphic violence. The studio intervened, trimming significant footage to secure a tighter runtime and maximize daily screenings, a strategy common in the late '80s. Rumor had it that, apart from Nielsen, no one on set dared speak directly to Stallone. As a curious detail, the hero's Mercury was Stallone's own car, with three replicas built for stunt work.

Stallone crafted the character in the mold of "Dirty Harry", creating an image that defined an era: mirrored sunglasses, matchstick in the corner of his mouth, clipped one-liners still quoted today. He personally selected Brian Thompson as the villain. Ironically, Thompson was not invited to the premiere and had to buy his own ticket. Music was another element Stallone liked to oversee. Having collaborated with Survivor on earlier "Rocky" films, he recommended John Cafferty here. He also included a track by Jean Beauvoir, along with a song by Robert Tepper, featuring Dann Huff on guitar. Tepper had contributed to "Rocky IV". Notably, Stan Bush's "The Touch", written specifically for "Cobra", was dropped and later found fame in "Transformers". The soundtrack remains a prized cassette in my collection.

Despite strong audience turnout, American critics tore into Stallone, Nielsen and the film itself. That never bothered me much. A sequel was seriously discussed at the time but never materialized. As a final, perhaps trivial note, like many films of that era, "Cobra" spawned a video game adaptation. I remember owning the ZX Spectrum version developed by Ocean Software. It was terrible. We didn't play it much.

Stay Rude, Stay Rebel, Stay Rock Bottom Magazine!!!

By The Hunter

When Javistone sent me a WhatsApp message asking if I wanted to write a few lines for the March issue, their issue number 50, he added: "… no pressure at all, okay?" And no, there's no pressure, but when people ask me to do these things, honestly… I just don't know what to say! Or maybe I do know everything I'd like to say, but I don't know how to say it. It's hard for me. It's hard for me to open up and express myself. I love anonymity and going unnoticed, but making this effort is worth it. Because talking about a project like this is a real pleasure. It's an absolute joy to enjoy something like Rock Bottom Magazine, a powerful space packed with information about everything we, its followers, love and, on top of that, they go and… print it!!! And that's my weakness, my world, my downfall: paper and everything that comes with it. Touching it, running your fingers over the cover; opening it at any random page and breathing it in; turning the pages and being blown away by every headline, photograph or illustration (that Koko Sakito!!) and feeling its physical presence and weight… and yes, let me tell you, it does have weight!



Magazines are what people now call "vintage" objects, part of a culture associated with times gone by, I don't know if better or worse, but every memory that comes to mind related to music magazines is a wonderful experience that helped me grow as a person: discovering new bands, new artists, new LPs, wanting to hear all of it and throwing myself onto the Metro heading downtown to walk through record stores until I found the gem I was looking for, and along the way meeting other crazy people like me with whom I shared passions, dreams and hopes. And suddenly, with those people, you improvise a newsroom in your parents' living room and you're creating your first fanzine, which over time grows, becomes more professional and you end up making magazines that influence other kids who see bands and vinyl records in those pages that they want to buy at any cost… and the wheel keeps turning. And time passes. And here we are, after years of hearing that punk, rock and printed magazines are all dying out, and look at this, a 50-year-old guy who has spent his whole life editing fanzines, writing a few lines about other people who publish a 217-page yearbook with a coated paper cover in 2026… Thank you. What more can I say? Simply, thank you.

Because people like you, who keep the faith and pour passion into projects like this without any profit motive, and I know firsthand how hard it is to keep something like this going, are more necessary than ever in these times of hatred, garbage, screens and fanaticism that we're living through, so that it still feels like there's some hope left in people doing things the right way.

What you do is art, and art is always something wonderful.

I hope that in a few years I'll receive another WhatsApp message, or maybe a mental message, who knows, asking if I'd like to write a few lines again… And of course I would.

And as we usually say in our editorials: Stay Rude, Stay Rebel, Stay ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE!!!
WRACK!! WRACK!!! (croaked a crow as it took flight).

EL ROCK DE LOS ÁNGELES ADOLESCENTES



Muddy World: Seven Records from the Dark Side of Life

Music has healing properties and carries the reputation of taming wild beasts, but those are probably the least interesting of its qualities. Popular music allows for less benevolent uses, which are, in fact, the ones that define it best: it can serve as a way to peer into experiences we would rather protect ourselves from, or that fascinate us despite the risk, letting artists live out for us those situations that return again and again in our desires, but from which we run… or maybe not. Below, seven murky albums about Freudian impulses of death and sex, criminal entanglements, mystical visions, and underwear. Don't thank us, it's our job.

Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds – "Murder Ballads" (Mute, 1996)



Nick Cave's ninth studio album has now turned thirty (which means it will probably be reissued at an astronomical price in the coming months), and it's a hallucinatory journey through crime reports: songs about murderers and victims, macabre ballads and swamp-side elegies. Cave adapts classics ("Stagger Lee"), Dylan songs ("Death Is Not the End"), and wraps himself in funereal duets with PJ Harvey ("Henry Lee") or Kylie Minogue ("Where the Wild Roses Grow") on a record where the full classic lineup of the Bad Seeds parades in all its glory. It would be the last album to feature the shrieks of Blixa Bargeld and possibly the last to echo Cave's traditional Southern Gothic sound, before he gradually transformed into the bleak crooner he is today.

Alexander "Skip" Spence – "Oar" (Columbia, 1969)



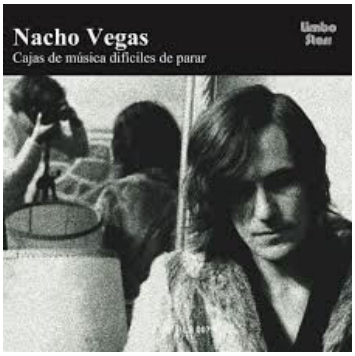
Alexander Spence headed to sunny California chasing the promise of flower power; he was the first drummer for Jefferson Airplane and the author of one of their best songs ("My Best Friend", which appears on their second album, "Surrealistic Pillow"). He left the band to found another acid rock institution, Moby Grape, playing guitar on two albums until LSD and his fragile mental health completely derailed his career. Spence was committed to a hospital for six months and, according to legend, left in his pajamas, got on a motorcycle and rode to Nashville, where he recorded his only solo album.

"Oar" is the destination of that escape, one not only from antipsychotics but from reality itself: a fascinating acid-folk record with brilliant songs ("Little Hands", "Broken Heart", "All Come to Meet Her"…) and trance-like moments that are hard to describe. Although Spence played again in later years and formed a few more short-lived bands, his life was marked by fragile health that kept him largely secluded. That hasn't stopped artists like Devendra Banhart or Beck (who re-recorded the entirety of "Oar" in 2009) from placing him on a well-deserved pedestal.

Nacho Vegas – "Cajas de música difíciles de parar" (Limbo Starr, 2003)

Nacho Vegas' second solo album remains my favorite of his entire career. It has just been reissued as a triple vinyl that does justice to the scale of the work: twenty seemingly fragile songs with a steel skeleton, in which Vegas grapples with emotional disasters, breakups, and a dark romance with drugs from which he managed to emerge unscathed…

The political and angrier side of his music reaches high points ("Gang Bang"), while the



personal side plunges into uncomfortable depths without the slightest shame ("La Plaza de la Soledá", "El Mundo en Calma"…). But perhaps the best moments on the album are the songs in which Vegas evokes the ambiguous condemnation of heroin (the enormous opening of "Las Noches Árticas", featuring the voice of J from Los Planetas, or the almost surreal fascination of "El Jardín de la Duermevela"), on a record as dark as it is irresistible. Listening to his latest album, "Vidas Semipreciosas" (2025), it's reassuring to see that Vegas has finally found some light at the end of the tunnel, even if we, the audience, enjoy the morbid side and sometimes believe we can impose on artists the obligation to remain cursed forever.

Demonios Tus Ojos – "Demonios Tus Ojos" (Grabaciones Accidentales, 1988)



What began as Javier Corcobado's first solo project after the dissolution of Mar Otra Vez ended up becoming the only album by a ghostly quartet that played just a couple of shows (opening for Sonic Youth on their first Spanish tour) and left behind only eleven recorded songs, collected on this self-titled album that brings together all the obsessions and deliriums Corcobado already carried within him, and which he would continue to explore in later works.

"Demonios Tus Ojos" is a harsh, unhinged record, flooded with a kind of dislocated blues rock filled with distortion, fractured rhythms and damaging melodies. The lyrics revel in stories of extreme love and emotional gore not suitable for every stomach. Sold online until now for outrageous sums (not a single copy for less than fifty euros), a new blood-red vinyl edition will be released on April 12th for the inevitable Record Store Day 2026.

Surfin' Bichos – "La luz en tus entrañas" (La Fábrica Magnética, 1989)

Fernando Alfaro is the one-eyed man who, more than thirty years ago, stared down Spanish music and cast a curse on it from which it should never be released. His first album at the helm of Surfin' Bichos is a hard-to-classify



artifact, somewhere between sickly pop and a strange rock alchemy that makes room for string and brass arrangements, inhospitable landscapes and an entire gallery of eccentric characters sprung from his pen.

Alfaro's music, whether with the Bichos, with Chucho or with Los Alienistas, is impossible to separate from the dented and perverse world of happy dogs, prophet lizards and apocalyptic three-wheeled vans that churns inside his head. In his recent first novel, "Mundo Turbio" (from which this article takes its title, published last spring by Contra), the broken glass of his lyrics fits together like puzzle pieces and the shards of his characters reassemble into a deeply unsettling parallel reality. The album is immense, but if I had to choose a couple of songs, I would suggest "Aráñame con Cariño" and "Crisis".

Rowland S. Howard – "Teenage Snuff Film" (Reliant Records, 1999)



Rowland Howard was the guitarist for The Birthday Party alongside Nick Cave, and after the band's implosion he formed a short-lived group called These Immortal Souls. However, the best of his career is scattered across the many records he made on his own or occasionally in collaboration with artists like Lydia Lunch or Nikki Sudden.

In 1999 he assembled his first solo collection of songs under the thorny title "Teenage Snuff Film", and he could not have created anything more unsettling or more hypnotic. The ten songs that make up the album sound the way only an artist battling his demons and resigning himself to losing the fight can sound. Howard sounds more like Nick Cave than Cave himself, with the added blessing of his guitar, as sinister as it is poetic, in dark pieces where an enigmatically attractive light occasionally breaks through. The songs are immense, but the most striking moment is an unimaginable version of Billy Idol's "White Wedding".



Soft Cell – "Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret" (Some Bizzare, 1981)

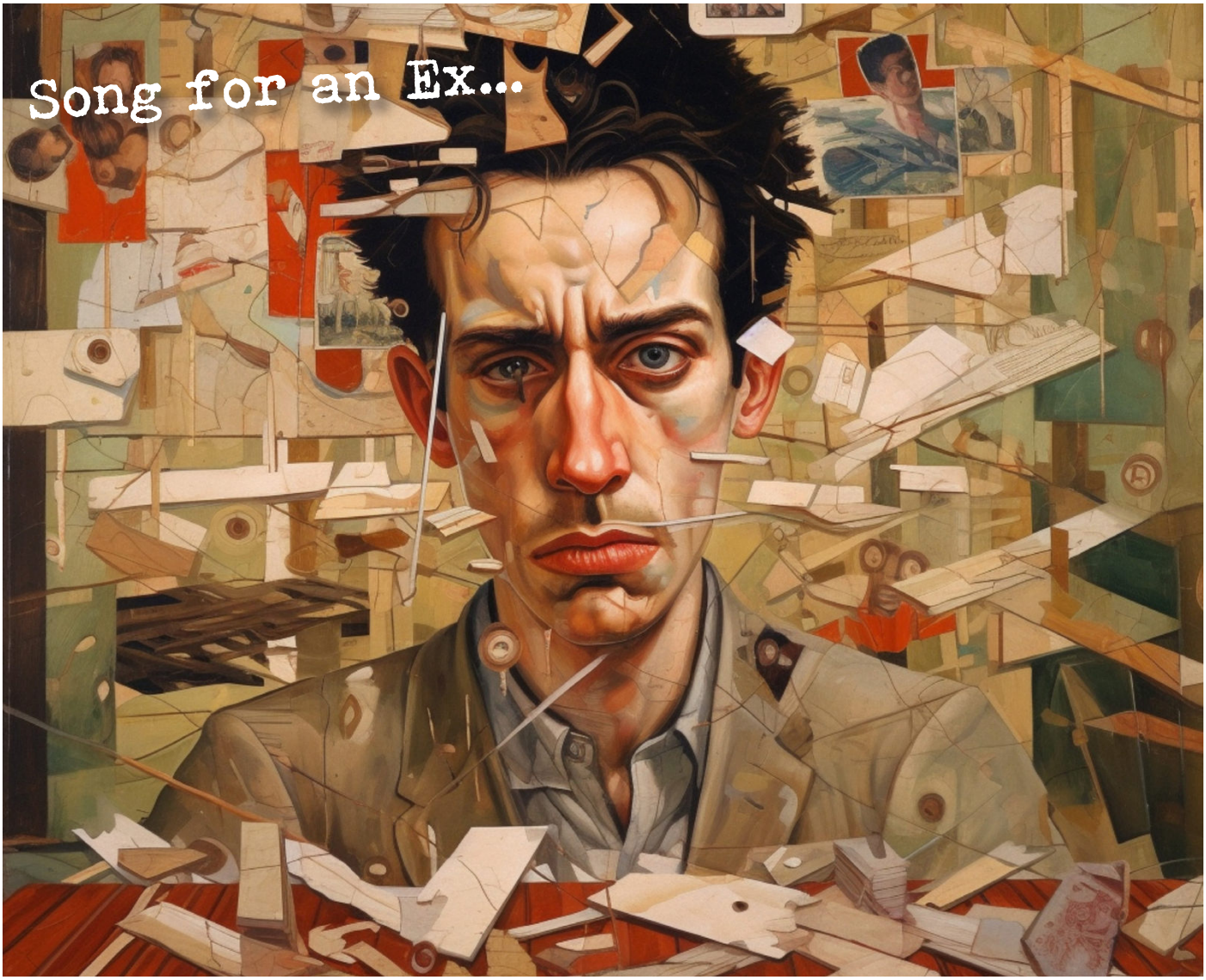
Everyone likes "Tainted Love". "Tainted Love" inevitably appears on every 80s hits compilation and plays at those early evening parties where middle-aged men and women treat each other to drinks. But "Tainted Love", in the voice of Marc Almond and under the hands of the recently deceased Dave Ball, is anything but a romantic ballad. Soft Cell recorded one of the most perverse and filthy albums about desire and sex that one could imagine, and they managed to make money from it. "Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret" is a collection of perversions disguised as techno-pop that would not withstand the censorious gaze of the new century for even a second: songs about sexual repression ("Frustration"), pornography ("Seedy Films"), sadomasochism ("Sex Dwarf"), and an entire gallery of deformed characters lining up outside a peep show. And then, in the middle of Sodom and Gomorrah, "Tainted Love", a cover of a Gloria Jones soul classic, which, surrounded by paraphilias and latex, feels more unsettling than any of the others.

+ Bonus: Ángel y las Güais – "Los pies sobre la tierra" (La General, 1985)

We have to face it: rock may not be dead, but right now it's stuck inside an iron lung with its vital signs at a minimum. Forty years ago it was still dangerous territory, a place it was pleasurable to step into, where poisonous plants like Ángel Altolaguirre could flourish: Iggy Pop's twin separated at birth, lascivious and mischievous, a cursed rock and roller by right, poet, producer of the early Caligari and the final Desechables. His journey through the jungle was short but intense. "Los Pies sobre la Tierra" is an unhinged record full of glamorous punk, songs about your underwear or whining vampires, recreating a lost world from which Altolaguirre himself stepped away in time to avoid a fatal collision. Today he's a yoga teacher, and the cosmos is more stable thanks to him.



Song for an Ex...



Joseph Allen McDonald, better known as Country Joe, shared an apartment with Janis Joplin on Lyon Street, in the neighborhood where you had to be in 1967, Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco. For several months they were in a relationship, you have to have faith to maintain a relationship with anyone in San Francisco in '67, and shortly after the Monterey Festival, Country Joe met Robin Menken, whom he began dating, she would become his wife in 1968, something that did not sit well with Janis, no matter how hippie they were. "You've started seeing a woman I don't respect very much," she told her ex, but even so, she asked him to write a song in her honor. Without hesitation, the musician and activist shaped "Janis" and included it on his most iconic album, "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die", released later that same year on the Vanguard label. The song, bucolic and pastoral, sends a tender message to the woman who had been his partner and friend just as she was taking off toward a stardom cut short in tragic fashion.

In my life, in waves of electric sound
and flashing light, she came,
into my life with the turn of a dial,
the movement of her hand, the warmth of her smile.
And though I know that you and I
could never find the kind of love we wanted together,
alone, I find myself missing you and me, you and me.

As a curiosity, months earlier Country Joe had dedicated the closing song of his first LP, "Electric Music for the Mind and Body" (1967), to the Jefferson Airplane singer. Guess the title.

In the first half of the nineties, Michelle McAdorey was part of a band in her native Toronto called Crash Vegas. Around that time she met Gary Louris and the two fell in love. According to statements by the Jayhawks singer in 2012, they met, fell madly in love in a short span of time, but it didn't work out for two significant reasons: she lived in Toronto, he in Minneapolis, and on top of that, Gary was married… In 2000, the Jayhawks released their second album without Mark Olson, in which they masterfully shifted toward pop, much to the dismay of their more country-leaning followers. "Smile", driven by the locomotive of the title track, which we recommend for any low moment in life, included another gem, with a flavor reminiscent of the Olson-era Jayhawks, titled "Better Days". Louris described the meaning of the song this way: "To me, it's a Canadian song. It's a song about that time, Toronto, Hamilton, wherever we were, where we fell in love and then it ended. It ended quickly and it was like one of those 'what might have been' songs. So it's a song of regret, really. And it's an ode to Michelle, whom I care about deeply, and I haven't spoken to her since I wrote that song. But it's a pretty intense lyric in terms of my memories of her apartment. It was an innocent time we spent together, but it was a beautiful time."

I made love in the Toronto rain
(I've seen better days)
From Hamilton I watch the train
(I've seen better days)
What you regret, you said softly, are things you never do
I regret not turning around
And running back home with you.

It seems that 1972 was a year given to the release of songs with enigmatic messages directed at lovers or former lovers. Two songs coincided in time: the well-known

"You're So Vain" by Carly Simon, which I won't discuss here because I already did so in my book "You're So Vain, You Probably Think This Song Is About You…", and "Day Dreaming" by Aretha Franklin, included on her powerful "Young, Gifted And Black". Both songs fueled rumors about the recipients of their messages. In Aretha Franklin's case, the rumors pointed quite accurately to Dennis Edwards, the former Temptations frontman who replaced David Ruffin in 1968, although this was not confirmed until 1999 in his autobiography. The two stars had a brief and volcanic relationship in the early seventies, which began when Dennis invited Aretha to a Temptations show in Saratoga Springs, New York. The Queen of Soul flew there, attended the show, and the two planned to fly back together the next morning. Instead, Dennis suggested, "Why don't we travel by limousine?... That'll give us hours of privacy." As Aretha herself confessed in "Aretha: From These Roots", by Aretha Franklin and David Ritz: "It turned out to be one of the best limousine rides in history. We joked, laughed, and shared lots of fun moments all the way back to New York. When we reached the city at sunset, the weather was warm, lovely. The world was at peace. It had been a beautiful ride; I was on a cloud, and it wasn't just my imagination." The singer ended her statement with a nod to one of the Temptations' undeniable hits. I would leave this song in quarantine within this article, since, judging by the lyrics, it's not entirely clear whether he was already an ex at that point or not…

I want to be what he wants
When he wants it and when he needs it
And when he's lonesome and feeling love-hungry
I'll be there to feed him
I love him a little more each day.

During the celebration of the diva's 69th birthday, the two former lovers reunited on stage for an improvised rendition of "The Way We Were".

Valerie Carter was born in Florida in 1953, but we can place her artistic ground zero in Laurel Canyon in the early seventies, where she arrived from New York with her band Howdy Moon to make their debut at the Troubadour. There, she caught the attention of musicians from the local scene such as Judy Collins, James Taylor and Jackson Browne. With the latter she would maintain both a professional and romantic relationship, brief and intense, which led her to perform and tour with him, to work as a backing vocalist on his albums and concerts, to co-write songs such as "Love Needs a Heart", "It Is One" and "Niño", and to leave a deep mark on the singer's heart. Years after their relationship ended, Browne would pay tribute to her in the form of a song. On his 1980 album "Hold Out", the German-Californian included "That Girl Could Sing", a song with a rock undercurrent and a tender soul, a recognition of a friendship between two wounded souls and an acceptance of a relationship with an expiration date. It was not until 2017, after Valerie Carter's death from a heart attack, that Jackson Browne revealed the recipient of that ode to a free spirit.

She was a friend to me when I needed one
If it wasn't for her, I don't know what I'd have done
She gave me back something that I was missing
It could have turned out to be almost anyone
Almost anyone…
With the possible exception
Of who I wanted it to be

As a curiosity, Steve Winwood also dedicated "Valerie" to her, the song that opened his 1982 album "Talking Back to the Night".

Denise Van Outen is a presenter-dancer-actress-singer, not very well known around these parts, who was in a relationship with Jay Kay at the turn of the millennium. Both were famous, young, attractive and so well matched that they became engaged to be married. A ritual they never completed, as the couple split in 2001 due, among other things, to their professional commitments. In an interview with Craig MacLean for The Telegraph in 2010, Kay revealed some of the reasons behind the breakup: "Well, well, you know. Cocaine may have played a part. She's a lovely girl. What may also have played a part was that I didn't like all that pressure stuff: 'Are we getting married? Let's be on this or that magazine cover.'" Around that time, Jamiroquai were immersed in the creation of their fifth LP, "A Funk Odyssey", and the whole breakup process and emotional fallout hovered over the recording of the album. In fact, in "honor" of Denise, he produced a number one in twenty-five minutes, as he told Billboard on August 25, 2001. As he explained to Esquire, "the song covers one day in my relationship with Denise. Not the whole relationship. 'You make me love you with a little l. I don't know what you want from me.' That's how it was with Den." The singer acknowledges the collapse of his relationship with the presenter, emphasizing that what should have been love with a capital L, LOVE, had become love with a lowercase l. The song became the jewel of that cosmic funk treatise titled "A Funk Odyssey", released on August 8, 2001, and it reached number 1 in Spain, number 2 in the USA and number 5 in the United Kingdom. And you all know it.

There you were, upset,
trying to come to terms
with the fact that what we had, and love itself,
were already dead.
Look how I'm coming undone,
because you can't decide what you really want from me.
Why does it have to be this way?
I can never know,
because you make me love you, love you, baby,
but with a lowercase "l."

> ***It seems that 1972 was a year given to the release of songs with enigmatic messages directed at lovers or former lovers. Two songs coincided in time: the well-known "You're So Vain" by Carly Simon, which I won't discuss here because I already did so in my book "You're So Vain, You Probably Think This Song Is About You…", and "Day Dreaming" by Aretha Franklin, included on her powerful "Young, Gifted And Black".***

In 1961 a young Bob Dylan arrived in New York and began cutting his teeth in the folk clubs, greatly helped by a Joan Baez who already knew the scene. Gradually, their professional relationship turned into a romantic one, between 1963 and 1965. Dylan's move away from the strict canons of pure folk also brought about his progressive, increasingly cold separation from Joan Baez. The final straw came during the 1965 tour of England, where he never invited her on stage with him. She left the tour only to watch Dylan begin a relationship with Sara Lowndes; it was all over.

Yet despite the disappointment, the New Yorker never stopped acknowledging the importance of Dylan's emergence in music and political activism. In 1968 she released "Any Day Now," an album entirely made up of songs by the bard, and in 1972 she wrote "To Bobby," in which she urges him to return to protest song and carry the torch of that struggle once again. But a strange phone call from a payphone in 1975, during which he read her the lyrics of "Lily, Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts," later included on "Blood on the Tracks" released that same year, unleashed a whirlwind of bitterness in the singer. She would channel it into "Diamonds and Rust," where she weighs the good, diamonds, and the bad, rust, memories associated with the end of any relationship, in this case her own with Dylan.

You who are so good with words
And at keeping things vague
Because I need some of that vagueness now
It's all clear
Yes, I loved you deeply
And if you're offering me diamonds and rust
I've already paid

We return to Robert Zimmerman to close the article, though in this case as the sender



of the message rather than its recipient. Regarding this song, there is no official confirmation about who the northern girl he sang to in 1963 actually was, but it is clear that he is addressing a former love. On his second album, "The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan", released in May 1963 by Columbia Records, the singer from Duluth included "The Girl of the North Country", a song he had written months earlier during his first visit to England.

In it, he nostalgically recalls a relationship that had already ended with a girl who had been his true love, yet he does so with a gentle gaze and a lingering desire to keep watching over her ("Please see if she has a warm coat to keep her from the howlin' winds"). The shortlist of possible muses focuses on two former loves from his native Minnesota, Echo Helstrom and Bonnie Beecher, as well as his New York ex, the more high-profile Suze Rotolo, who appears walking arm in arm with him on the album cover.

I wonder if she remembers me at all.
Many times I have prayed,
In the darkness of my night,
In the brightness of my day.
So, if you are traveling through the beautiful northern region,
Where the winds blow strong at the border,
Remember me to someone who lives there.
She was once my true love.

Juan Carlos León



Lilith Fair, the Strength of a Community in the Face of a Betraying Industry



It was the summer of 1997 when contemporary music witnessed an event that marked a turning point in the music industry: the emergence of Lilith Fair, a touring festival that, in its early editions, featured exclusively female artists and female-led bands in its lineup. An initiative that broke deeply rooted patterns in the sector, challenging the long-standing sexist tradition that had limited the visibility and success of professional women musicians on major stages.

Origins: a response to inequality in the industry

The spark that ignited Lilith Fair came from the frustration of Canadian singer-songwriter Sarah McLachlan with the music industry. McLachlan had repeatedly faced refusals from promoters and radio stations who claimed that two women could not be placed back-to-back on a lineup or radio playlist because "it wouldn't sell", according to the mindset of programmers at the time. Determined to prove them wrong, McLachlan, together with agent Marty Diamond and executives Dan Fraser and Terry McBride, conceived a festival that would be, from its very name to its essence, a space for women in music.

The name of the event, Lilith Fair, was pure symbolism. "Lilith" comes from the figure in Jewish legend identified as Adam's "first wife", a woman who refused to be subjugated and who has since been reinterpreted as an icon of female autonomy. "Fair" expressed the idea of an equitable space, free from prejudice.

With the arrival of 1997, Lilith Fair was set in motion and launched with an extremely ambitious lineup that took the festival across the United States and Canada. The first edition included more than sixty performances across thirty-seven stops, with McLachlan headlining each date, accompanied by artists such as Fiona Apple, Tracy Chapman, Sheryl Crow, Jewel and Indigo Girls, among many others. But what made this festival special was not only its lineup of powerful women, it was the community built around them. The music spanned a wide range of genres, folk, pop, rock, country, R&B, and the atmosphere was different from most festivals of the time: oriented toward solidarity, collaboration and mutual support.

Lilith Fair was far from a minor phenomenon. Contrary to the predicted failure proclaimed by industry experts, it became the highest-grossing touring festival of that year, generating more than 16 million dollars in revenue. Such was its financial success that over its first three years it accumulated more than 50 million dollars and welcomed over one and a half million attendees. In addition, one dollar from every ticket sold was donated to local women's charities, strengthening the project's social role and its connection to causes of justice and equality.

The power of visibility

One of Lilith Fair's most enduring legacies was its impact on the careers of many artists who had previously suffered discrimination within the industry. Artists such as Christina Aguilera, Nelly Furtado and Dido, who participated at different moments during the tours, are today widely recognized in part thanks to their presence at the festival, which helped propel their careers to broader audiences. However, beyond the already established names, the festival also created space for emerging voices. In many cities, a third stage was set up exclusively for local or lesser-known artists, selected through contests or local initiatives, helping to open doors that had previously been closed to many women creators.

If there is one thing those involved in this unusual event consistently emphasize, it is Lilith Fair's ability to become a space of resistance, support and unity among women artists and audiences. It functioned as a "safe space", in contrast to the competitiveness and tensions so common in every corner of the industry. For the first time, cooperation among women on and behind the stage was the defining feature. They were demonstrating that it was possible to build a productive community capable of fostering a successful and professional cultural model. Collective work bore fruit.

Criticism and legacy

Of course, Lilith Fair was not without criticism

and controversy. Part of the press and more conservative sectors of the country mocked the proposal, dismissing it as “just a girls’ festival”, belittling its purpose and criticizing the lack of diversity in its early editions. During the tours, press conferences became increasingly hostile, with media outlets accusing the organizers of bias, limited stylistic range or what today would be labeled “feminazism”. They not only predicted the event’s failure but also reproached the participating women for turning the space into something “anti-men”. Which was far from reality, as anyone watching footage from those concerts can easily confirm.

Even so, after its first three editions, the project concluded in 1999, mainly due to organizer exhaustion and shifting musical trends of the time. There was an attempt to revive it years later, in 2010, updating the formula with new artists and greater stylistic diversity in the lineup, but it did not achieve the expected success, and that marked the definitive end of Lilith Fair. Perhaps that was inevitable. The initiative had emerged at a time when women were almost entirely invisible on most festival lineups worldwide. Female bands and artists were relegated to secondary slots, and women’s roles in music, if not decorative or confined to overtly sexualized themes, were largely deemed irrelevant. That had been the norm for most of history. Lilith Fair arrived at a crucial moment to prove that women not only know how to sing, they also know how to produce, organize and manage. That the industry’s prejudices were entirely unfounded. An event like this could not only function, it could become a resounding success, as it clearly did. Today, its legacy continues to inspire major female voices who create gender-balanced festivals, women-focused concert series and greater awareness within the scene.

The festival has been the subject of the documentary “Lilith Fair: Building a Mystery – The Untold Story”, released in 2025, which revisits its history through interviews with participating artists and examines its impact on contemporary music.

Although the initiative had a relatively brief lifespan, its narrative of resistance and sisterhood undoubtedly left a mark and served as the spark that ignited awareness around what has unfortunately become one of the longest-running debates in history: the role of women in the music industry. And yes, it is 2026, and we are still in the fight.

Ada Salas



La última trinchera del periodismo musical independiente

By Rhyan Paul

When I moved to Valencia three years ago, it felt like I'd detonated my own career and crawled out of the crater with a camera bag over my shoulder and no map. New city, new language, bands I'd never heard of, zero contacts, no publication to shoot for, nobody to pitch to — nothing. After more than thirty years embedded in music subcultures across Europe, suddenly I was starting from scratch, waiting for a respawn that might never come. It wasn't just that I was new here; I was completely adrift.

In the middle of that fog of disorientation and late-night Google searches, I stumbled across Rock Bottom Magazine. What grabbed me first wasn't hype or SEO bait — it was the project's aesthetic. The design. The curation. The attention to detail. Clean typography, sharp photography, real journalism. No click-farm garbage, no robotic "10 albums you should hear" lists, no empty calories. A proper music magazine for people who genuinely love music.

I wrote to them, mostly expecting silence. Instead, I got a message from Javi — the captain of the ship — asking if I wanted to collaborate and come aboard. Of course I did. When you're new in a city and someone in the musical trenches offers you a hand, you grab it with both.

Since then I've been a regular contributor, and proud of it. Javi took a chance on "the foreign guy with a camera," opened a door for me, and somewhere along the way became a friend. Seeing my photo of The Hellacopters on the cover of the 2024 print edition was one of those full-circle moments that reminds you why you keep doing this madness. Landing the back cover the following year wasn't bad either.

The music industry today is not the one I entered as a teenage photographer 35 years ago. Back then, digital didn't exist. You shot on film. You prayed to the gods of exposure. Editors gave you three rolls to cover an arena show and told you to make them count. Vinyl release dates were sacred events you waited months for. And if you wanted the new issue of your favourite music magazine, you went early to the shop before it sold out, then spent the whole afternoon devouring every word, every photo, every inch of design. Information wasn't a torrent; it was a ritual.

Digital blew the doors off all of that — for better and for worse. It democratised production, distribution, photography, criticism and fandom, but it also drowned culture in noise. Music media entered a war for clicks, algorithms replaced editors, and long-form writing was thrown off a cliff in favour of "content," that cursed word.

Rock Bottom refuses to play that game. It keeps one foot planted firmly in the good times — not as nostalgic cosplay, but as a statement of principles. It isn't a frantic feed of daily news. It isn't a disposable content machine. It's a monthly magazine: curated, edited, proofread, designed and released with intention. Something you wait for. Something you download, sit with, and enjoy without doom-scrolling through 300 unrelated headlines.

And then, once a year, they go even further and publish a print edition — thick, glossy, collector-grade — a love letter to the golden age of music journalism on paper. Something you can put on a shelf. Something that smells of ink, photography and care. In 2026, that alone is an act of rebellion.

Rock Bottom isn't "just another music website." It's one of the last independent music magazines still standing — built by people who care, in a world that barely notices when the things that mattered start to disappear.
May it run for many years to come.



One of the surprises of the season, this series stars a buoyant Ethan Hawke under the direction of Sterlin Harjo, known for "Reservation Dogs", 2021, and takes the shape of a modern noir that will delight lovers of hardboiled fiction and the cinema of the Coen brothers. It follows a bookstore owner who turns to journalism purely for pleasure, that sounds familiar, to investigate and bring to light truths that, as its Spanish title "Verdades ocultas" suggests, remain hidden beneath a veil of lies driven by the worst instincts of shady characters with even shadier interests. "Lowdown" can mean the unvarnished truth, but also something base or despicable. Dark figures, buried truths, contemptible agendas, all the ingredients required for a full-fledged noir, and "The Lowdown" unquestionably qualifies.

"The Lowdown" is another "The Offer", a gem that seems not to exist despite being available on the platform of the famous mouse, while in the United States it streams on Hulu. It is crafted with taste and class, seasoned with indispensable touches of black humor. The spirit of the Coen brothers hovers constantly over the production, especially in the early episodes, where a scatterbrained, and wonderful, Ethan Hawke unmistakably evokes that glorious character from "The Big Lebowski" portrayed by the eternal Jeff Bridges. Lee Raybon is a kind of Dude, disheveled, though slightly more grounded, but not by much. A nihilistic bookseller from Tulsa, Oklahoma, who considers himself a truthstorian, a term of his own invention that he awkwardly explains as follows: "I read things, I find things out, I drive around and discover things. Then I write about those things. Some people care, some don't. I'm always broke, but let's just say I have an obsession with the truth". And of course, in a place like Tulsa, filled with rednecks, niggers, skinheads, corrupt politicians, gay landowners, or religious congregations of dubious integrity, what could possibly go wrong?

Conceived, written, and directed by Sterlin Harjo, "The Lowdown" is a modern noir that reeks of love for cinema, think David Lynch, "Pulp Fiction", Paul Thomas Anderson, Raymond Chandler, and of doing things patiently, at a slow burn. Where the Coens played with absurdity and near-metaphysical irony, the humor here is drier and more uncomfortable. The series absorbs that Coen-esque DNA, sharp dialogue and situations oscillating between the tragic and the ridiculous, but filters it through a somewhat more realistic lens. The result is a chronicle of cascading mistakes, of small decisions that generate disproportionate consequences.

Visually, the reference to "Fargo" is evident. Yet its roots stretch further back, to the noir novels of Jim Thompson. As Jesús Sánchez, an inveterate reader and connoisseur of hardboiled fiction, once told me, without him I might never have read Raymond Chandler, an unforgivable omission, Thompson's presence is unmistakable in "The Lowdown". A contemporary of Chandler, Thompson is a foundational figure of noir fiction. Not only does Hawke's storyline feel as though it could have been lifted from one of his novels, but the pulp paperbacks through which the character portrayed by Tim Blake Nelson, Dale Washberg, leaves his trail of clues are Thompson's own works, an obviously deliberate detail. Nor is it accidental that Lee Raybon's misadventures pay subtle homage to journalist and historian Lee Roy Chapman of Tulsa, who in 2015 shook the city's foundations by revealing that one of its founders had been linked to the Ku Klux Klan and the 1921 Tulsa Massacre, an inhuman bloodbath in which more than ten thousand men reduced the Black district of Greenwood to rubble during eighteen hours of destruction, leaving over three hundred dead and more than a thousand injured, and worst of all, without proper investigation afterward.

Open spaces, desolate atmospheres, and a constant sense of isolation elevate the setting beyond mere backdrop, transforming it into a narrative force that amplifies the protagonist's loneliness. Ethan Hawke, as mentioned, is in formidable acting shape, nominated for an Oscar for "Blue Moon", and plunges into a case that pushes him from blow to blow, from trunk to trunk, always unaware of where the next impact will come from, always arriving half a second too late.

The plot and characters are a feast for the senses. Not only does Maya's father shine with remarkable maturity, forgive the joke, Ethan, I am sure you will, but Kyle MacLachlan is superb as the distracted and slightly bumbling mayoral candidate Donald Washberg. Tim Blake Nelson is exquisite, commanding every scene as Donald's brother. Jeanne Tripplehorn is consistently formidable. Keith David is, as usual, magnificent. Dale Dickey is wonderful. And what can one say about the damn Peter Dinklage, what an actor. We must not forget the great Graham Greene, remembered as Kicking Bird in "Dances with Wolves", 1990, who filmed his final scenes before passing away during production. The ensemble delivers outstanding performances, supported by a sharp script and an exquisite score composed by none other than JD McPherson.

Intriguing, occasionally maddening, always entertaining, "The Lowdown" is one of those series no one will mention at the end of the year, yet any true film lover should watch it, popcorn bucket in hand and the volume turned up to eleven.

Javistone

“Sorry Baby”



In recent years, female directorial debuts have stood out for their spontaneous emergence and remarkable quality. Following in the wake of “Lady Bird” by Greta Gerwig and the outstanding “Aftersun” by Charlotte Wells, Eva Victor joins this group of talented artists by starring in and directing her own film.

Thanks to A24, the great champion of independent and creative cinema, we have been annually gifted with gems like this. “Sorry, Baby” is a necessary story, a story about empathy. It follows the protagonist, Agnes, during a visit from her friend Lydie. Through flashbacks, the film gradually reconstructs Agnes’s past, which was marked by an act of sexual abuse committed by her doctoral thesis mentor. From that point on, the narrative explores the devastating consequences this trauma has on the young student’s life.

The Franco-American director delivers outstanding work in both writing and direction. With subtlety, she reopens the protagonist’s wounds in order to make us see and understand what a victim of abuse must endure. The film does not seek to sensationalize the harm. Instead, through its camerawork and storytelling, it conveys the fears and persistent unease that stem from trauma.

The film presents one of the most compelling characters of the year. Agnes is the soul of the story, an endearing figure. Despite what she has suffered, she takes refuge in humor, drawing the audience closer and fostering genuine empathy for her experience. Beyond her deeply human direction, Eva Victor’s performance deserves special mention. She brings Agnes to life with restraint and emotional precision, moving the viewer through subtlety rather than excess. Her friend Lydie, portrayed by the excellent Naomi Ackie, shares striking on-screen chemistry with Victor and delivers a strong supporting performance.

In my view, this film’s very existence is crucial. “Sorry, Baby” should be screened in sexual education programs. It stands as a powerful example of how kindness is insufficient when the fundamental principle of sexual respect, consent, is violated. Showing cases like this and their repercussions is essential for our society and for cultivating collective empathy. Your body and your life belong to you.

Francisco La Rubia



The Paulie`s corner
Annie Wilkes, “Misery”



Some villains make noise the moment they appear. Darth Vader steps into frame and that cold, mechanical breathing is enough to freeze your blood. Hannibal Lecter does the opposite: quiet, composed, with a gaze that suggests he might be mentally preparing a recipe with you as the main course. Saul Goodman arrives flashing a toothpaste-commercial grin in a cheap suit, and you instantly know not to trust him. And then there’s Annie Wilkes, who walks in smiling. And that, more often than not, is worse.

Portrayed by an extraordinary Kathy Bates, in the role that propelled her to the top, Annie is not a refined killer or a criminal mastermind. She doesn’t set out to harm anyone. She’s a nurse. She lives alone in a snowbound house and, as she proudly repeats, she is the “number one fan” of novelist Paul Sheldon, played by a formidable James Caan. That phrase, “I’m your number one fan,” delivered with almost childlike pride, is the first warning sign. Something isn’t right. And it really isn’t.

What makes Annie so unsettling is that you don’t see her coming. At first, it feels like fate has handed Paul a guardian angel. She rescues him from a car crash, nurses him back from the brink. Warm soup, soft blankets, gentle tones. Domestic kindness wrapped in snow and isolation. But that light gradually dims, revealing a psyche straight out of a textbook: a fully fledged psychopath. Her madness is coated in homely normality. She cares for him tenderly, and if she dislikes the way his novel ends, she calmly smashes his ankles with a sledgehammer. No theatrics. No rage. Just the composure of someone convinced she is doing the right thing. Because how could you kill off the character that sustains her empty life, a life so hollow it must be filled with fictional people and invented worlds?

The film, based on the novel by Stephen King, is a masterclass in physical and psychological torment. Paul is tied to a bed, but Annie controls everything: the house, the food, the medication, the clock, and above all, the narrative. When she discovers her favorite character has died in the latest book, she doesn’t experience it as a literary choice. She experiences it as betrayal. For Annie, fiction is real. Therefore, the writer owes her obedience. After all, she’s his “number one fan.”

That’s where her paranoia fully surfaces. Annie cannot tolerate a world that fails to align with her expectations. If reality deviates from the script she’s written in her mind, she rewrites it. Not through dialogue, but through violence. And what’s most disturbing is that she never perceives herself as the villain. She feels wronged, deceived, humiliated. In her twisted logic, Paul hurt her first.

There’s something profoundly cruel in that blend of naïveté and sadism. Annie is magnetic and horrifying at the same time. She’s like that seemingly harmless neighbor down the hall, the one who greets you every morning with a wide smile while her cats weave around her legs. She might bake you custard. Or she might decide to maim you if you refuse a favor.

Javistone

We Are All Howard

Niles Crane ("Frasier")



There are characters who do not need to be killed off for us to understand that life has run them over. Niles Crane is one of them. In the sophisticated ecosystem of the formidable "Frasier", we are rewatching it as a family and it is an endless stream of laughter at the misadventures of the Crane brothers and company, where everything is verbal wit and elegant neurosis, Niles represents the kind of man who has everything in theory and almost nothing in emotional practice.

A successful psychiatrist, cultured to excess, lover of opera and wines whose names are impossible to pronounce, although sherries stand out in Frasier's house, forgive the local winery reference, Niles could be the caricature of bourgeois success in gray and rainy Seattle. But beneath that varnish beats a constant tremor. His marriage to Maris, that fascinating character who is invisible and omnipresent at the same time, is the best example: a brilliant man reduced to the smallest expression by a relationship that diminishes him without ever raising its voice. We do not need to see Maris to understand that Niles lives conditioned by her.



The greatness of the character, and also his comic tragedy, lies in his inability to manage what truly matters. He can dissect the human mind in his consulting room, yet he falls apart in front of Daphne, the young English caregiver of Martin Crane, the dearly missed John Mahoney, who passed away in 2018. He loves her silently for years, idealizing her as if desire were forbidden territory. Poor Niles knows no other strategy than waiting. He suffers, fantasizes, even competes with his own brother for proximity to her.

Portrayed by a masterful David Hyde Pierce, I would say he is hardly remembered for many other roles, the character completely devoured him, with millimetric precision, every gesture, every fainting spell, every childish joy, or allergy, every exaggeratedly refined movement reinforces that sense of permanent fragility. He is a hypersensitive man in a world that rewards performed confidence, not in vain are his particular Moriartys the sharp-tongued Roz Doyle and the single-minded Bulldog.

And yet, that is the key. Niles is not your typical loser. He is not mediocre nor a failure. He is someone who feels too sophisticated for a world that does not understand him, a world he perceives as dirty, he wipes the café chairs before sitting down, coarse, and devoid of elegance. The number of moments in which you burst out laughing with Niles while simultaneously wanting to hug him, a hug he would undoubtedly reject instantly, is countless. As he himself might say, "I do not need therapy. I just need the world to improve". Who could possibly not love such a character?

Javistone

"Marty Supreme"



An exclusive jacket, an orange Zeppelin, or trading bars with rising rapper EsDeekid form part of what may be the most ambitious marketing campaign of the twenty-first century in cinema. Ambition defines Timothée Chalamet, and in "Marty Supreme" he shows just how far he is willing to go to secure his place in film history.

The seventh art can be capricious, and this century seems fascinated by stories of obsession. After "Whiplash", "Black Swan", and "Challengers", "Marty Supreme" joins that lineage. Compulsive and hungry for power and glory, Safdie pushes this idea to the extreme, provoking a wide range of reactions in the viewer. In this case, ping-pong serves as the narrative excuse to tell Marty's story and his pursuit of greatness within the sport, mirroring, curiously enough, the logic of real life.

As in "Hamnet", the New York actor carries the film entirely on his shoulders. His performance is a delight and the finest male performance of the year. You empathize with him, yet you despise him completely. Marty Mauser will be idolized by those unwilling to interrogate the film, much like Walter White or Patrick Bateman. He is a complex figure, and it is fascinating how everything revolves around him, with each supporting character functioning as a vector to deepen the protagonist's eccentric personality. From a screenwriting standpoint, it is an impeccably executed strategy.

If we look beyond Timothée, we encounter a sea of controversies that have fueled near-daily Twitter discourse. To begin with, the direction is, for the first time, handled solely by Josh Safdie rather than the Safdie brothers as a duo. While he retains the stylistic hallmarks seen in the excellent "Uncut Gems" and "Good Time", one hopes he has not retained the alleged cruelty of past shoots. The brothers' split reportedly stemmed from a scene involving non-consensual sexual content with a minor actress, directed by Josh himself. The controversy is tied to his preference for casting real people rather than trained actors, in this case an ex-convict recently released from prison. One hopes the matter is resolved justly.

Safdie's approach continues here with the casting of Tyler, The Creator, who, beyond being one of today's major musical artists, proves more

than capable in front of the camera, delivering a more than solid performance. Gwyneth Paltrow also appears, returning from retirement in fine form. Another figure surrounded by controversy is Odessa A'Zion, whose name, status as a nepo baby, and recent uproar over being cast as a racialized character she has since distanced herself from have left her little peace. Despite this, Odessa demonstrates professionalism and considerable talent in her scenes. And as if that were not enough, businessman Kevin O'Leary not only appears in the film but also participates in promotional meetings.

Its powerful narrative, the anxiety it transmits, and its remarkable score will likely turn "Marty Supreme" into a classic in the years to come. Within weeks, it may well earn Chalamet his first statuette. Undoubtedly one of the most relevant films of this outstanding year in audiovisual culture, whose versatility allows us the pleasure of witnessing major works such as this on the big screen.

Francisco La Rubia

"Hamnet"



When you leave Marvel behind and are free to fully unleash your creativity, that is when magic happens. Praised by audiences and critics alike, Chloé Zhao, director of "Eternals", delivers an adaptation based on Maggie O'Farrell's novel. Late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England reaches the big screen through the story of its most emblematic figure, William Shakespeare. "Hamnet" is not just another film about the famous playwright; it is a portrait of the harshness of rural England and of the artist's family, placing his wife Agnes firmly at the center of the narrative.

I would be unable to delve into this review without highlighting the axis upon which the entire film rests. Jessie Buckley steals your attention, your soul, and your tears. Her heartbreaking performance is bound to take her to the Oscar stage. After watching "If I Had Legs I'd Kick You", I thought no one could surpass Rose Byrne, but I was wrong. The Irish actress sweeps everything in her path and delivers one of the finest performances of the decade, impeccable.

For that reason, credit must also go to Chloé Zhao for her direction of the cast. Beyond our leading actress, Paul Mescal is, as always, extraordinary, and his performance lacks nothing, except perhaps recognition from the Academy. Even the Shakespeare child delivers a remarkable turn. Nothing less could be expected from Zhao, who has earned widespread praise from her entire team for both her professional excellence and her warmth on set.

The cinematography and the score are two of the film's other great strengths. Combined with the superb screenplay, they provide beautiful moments that show how the famed author arrived at some of his most celebrated achievements, such as writing "Romeo and Juliet" or his monumental "Hamlet", both portrayed as being inspired by his wife. Zhao therefore places far greater emphasis on the family story, making the loss of a child the central theme and employing mystical and magical elements as metaphorical vehicles, rendering them both believable and deeply moving. Her depiction of the protagonists' emotions is sublime and serves as the driving force of the viewing experience.

On a personal note, I had the good fortune of attending the screening with my grandfather, and his perspective was illuminating. For him, the most striking aspect was the way the film portrays the fleeting nature of life. Life, fragile and precarious, resonated deeply with him because he had lived through similar experiences. To convey that feeling so powerfully and to evoke such memories is both extraordinarily difficult and profoundly beautiful. That is where the film's excellence truly lies.

"Hamnet" is rawness, coldness, beauty, and nature, but above all it is a major production that stands out for its technical brilliance. Jessie Buckley reigns supreme, and together with the music and cinematography delivers a masterclass in truly great cinema.

Francisco La Rubia

GLUECIFER

“Cuando empezamos a ensayar para Azkena, no estaba seguro de si aún podía cantar como antes, pero después de unos cuantos ensayos en los que simplemente tosía como un loco, esa vieja bestia de voz volvió”.

If this were a Scorsese movie, Biff and each of his henchmen would be described as “one of ours”. Ever since those Scandinavian bands rescued us in the late 90s from the invasion of tracksuit metal and a nauseating strain of neo-grunge, we have placed Gluecifer, Turbonegro, Backyard Babies, and The Hellacopters on the altar of the greatest bands of our lives. In 2026 everything has changed. That stampede of titans tearing through venues across Spain, as they once did, no longer exists. But there are still those who keep the flame alive. Gluecifer, after their wonderful return to the stage, thanks to the people at Azkena Rock Festival, came back and realized that we were still here, that the years may have passed but the energy and the songs remain intact. I saw them twice in Madrid, and the machine was more than well-oiled. But there came a point when the band needed new songs, and they had the courage to release a brutally honest record, straight to the face, to the chin, I would say. Because “Same Drug New High” is a hell of an album. Biff and company have left us all stunned and counting the days until we see them live again, with a tour that will cover the entire country. We managed to get in touch with the good old Biff, who, after years working as a political commentator on Norwegian television, has returned to where he truly belongs: on stage, spitting out authentic, high-octane punk and roll.

First of all, thank you very much for taking the time to talk to us. In our magazine, and in Spain in general, you have a good number of loyal fans, and we can say that your comeback is not just one of the news stories of the year, but of the decade. Do you feel that special affection the Spanish public has for Gluecifer?

That affection is one hundred percent



reciprocal. We love Spain and the Basque Country and have played some of our most memorable show there

The first time we saw you live, 25 years ago, you were practically beardless kids; now you're clearly grown men with obvious maturity. Over all this time, do you feel that anything has changed in the way you approach a new album and a new tour?
Well, I take the obvious maturity as a compliment. It's been a long time since we made a record, and I guess we have changed a bit as people with the years, We all do, right. But when it came to recording and playing live, I think we approach that as we always have done. We strive to make and play good rock'n'roll, and we love doing it. That remains the same. The difference is maybe that we know a bit more about how to do it, and that we are a little more relaxed about it. Which I think is to our advantage.

My first time (Javi) was at La Sala Sol in 1998. Here's a photo I took. Do you remember the energy of those concerts? I still remember that show with excitement. I was blown away just seeing you come out wearing red lamé shirts.
I remember those shows as very late, very hot and very wild. And I remember that the endless Madrid nights after the shows often ended with quite blurry memories. Those shirts, man they were stinky, soggy and worn out. But they did the trick, didn't they?

In the late 90s there were a handful of bands that, from here, seemed to come from the same place: Backyard Babies, Hellacopters, Turbonegro, you… but in reality that wasn't the case. Even so, you ended up forming a movement that revitalised old-school rock: wild, energetic… Did you feel that yourselves back in Norway, that you were part of something, of a movement? For us, you definitely were.
Yeah we did. Suddenly Scandinavian bands playing high-energy rock'n'roll were in high demand all over Europe. What a time to be alive, and play live too. I think we all opened some doors for each other back then. There is something nice about being a part of a wave, or a phenomenon.

Three years ago we were able to see you again on stage in Madrid. Was it that tour that led to the decision to start composing and recording again?
That's right. After the show we celebrated in classic Madrid-fashion, and at a point I was so excited about the whole thing that I said to Arne (Captain Poon) that there is no way we can stop doing this. But to play more shows we need some new songs. The day after Arne cautiously approached me and asked if I was serious, and since I am a man for my words, I said yes. And this was the start of the new record.

We've been able to listen to the album (many times!) and it's simply granite-solid: hard and direct. Do any of these songs come from the past and have now been reworked, or are they all completely new compositions?
I guess both Arne and Rolf had some riffs and ideas in the bank. But I would say that we wrote this thing together kind of from scratch. So yeah, this is fresh stuff.

Your first concert after a long time was in 2018 at the Azkena Festival. Did they convince you, or had you already discussed it among yourselves?
It was the offer from Azkena that led to us sitting down for the first time in many years and discuss whether we should give it a shot. Fortunately we said yes. Seems like all major decisions for Gluecifer is connected to Spain or Basque Country, doesn't it? The festival was great. Superb line-up, we got to meet Ian Hunter too.

Biff, many singers lose vocal power as they get older. How do you deal with that? You're the same Biff as ever!
It comes from the heart I guess. But really, I don't know. When we started rehearsing for Azkena, I was not sure if I still could sing like I used too. But after a few rehearsals where I just coughed like crazy, that old beast of a voice returned. There's one thing that have not matured, obviously.

Your new album has overwhelming energy: it's direct, powerful, furious… Did you talk about how it should sound, or did it just come out naturally?
We wanted it to be kind of simple. Less overdubs, more the sound of the band playing. Direct was a keyword too. We cute the songs pretty much down to the bone. Powerful of course too, we have a lot of power in our sound, and I think our good friend Johnny Skalleberg, who recorded and mixed the record, captured that perfectly.

> ***"After the show we celebrated in classic Madrid-fashion, and at a point I was so excited about the whole thing that I said to Arne (Captain Poon) that there is no way we can stop doing this. But to play more shows we need some new songs."***

"Made in the Morning" is one of the most powerful and well-rounded songs on the album. What can you tell us about that song?
It came pretty late in the process. It is a super simple song, and has some AC/DC-vibe to it. Not that anyone can play like AC/DC, but a vibe. I listened a lot to the Powerade-record while we were making SDNH, and maybe you can hear that in the song.

"Pharmacy" has a very strong The Cult vibe, which we love. What can you tell us about this song? Are you fans of The Cult? If so, which albums are your favourites? In our editorial team we never agree: for example, Javi is a big fan of the classic albums and The Cult, while Jesse likes them all, even the ones released in this century—he's a big fan of Choice of Weapon.
We are Cult-fans indeed. I am kind of a basic Cult-bitch, so my favorite record is Love. I was a teenager in the eighties you know. I love that slightly dramatic touch to Ian Astbury's singing. And of course all the guitar work.

At Rock Bottom Magazine we're big fans of Pristine (I don't know if you're familiar with them); we interviewed them a year ago and they're incredible. Their latest album, "The Lines We Cross", was one of our Albums of the Year in 2023. How is the rock scene in Norway at the moment?
Had to check out Pristine, after reading this. Nice seventies metal feel to it. Didn't know them before this actually. Some good rock going on in Norway indeed. The Good, The Bad and The Ugly of course, who will play with us in Spain. But also Kvelertak, Hayeminol, Kristi Brud, Honningbarna to name a few.

Gluecifer will be touring our country soon — what can we expect from these upcoming shows? We're hoping to catch you in Seville. Fingers crossed we can see you afterwards, buy you a beer, and thank you in person for so many years of great music.
Classic and mature rock shows to be expected soon!! Looking forward to seeing you all, and thank you for your kind words. Stay frosty!

Javistone/Jesús Sánchez



Gluecifer, Sala Sol (1998), Javistone`s photo

NOVEDADES

“El Futuro”, Los Deltonos (Folc Records)



In 2026, writing a review of Los Deltonos is no easy task. And not because of any lack of quality, don’t get me wrong. Quite the opposite. After forty years of career and more than twenty albums to their name, all at an extraordinary level, it is difficult not to fall into repetition with certain adjectives. Without a doubt, one of the most repeated is “honesty”, because the band’s career cannot be understood without it. And on “El futuro”, that adjective once again becomes the absolute protagonist across the twelve songs that make up the record.

A dozen statements that together form a survival manual for the uncertain future that besieges us, a handhold in turbulent times, all carried by sharp lyrics that dig into your brain and powerful blues-soaked riffs with a barroom aroma, the unmistakable trademark of Hendrik Röver. Despite changes and upheavals, he has managed to keep alive a project that is vital for Spanish rock, steadily gaining followers through perseverance and respect. Songs such as “El día aquel”, “Indecisión”, “El mal menor” or “El futuro” could already sit comfortably among the band’s classic staples, despite being brand new.

There are also moments of emotion and reflection in “La Fuerza” or “Meteorito”, where Hendrik once again delivers everything we already know and value in his lyricism. Another chapter (and counting…) in a discography that many artists sleeping between silk sheets would love to claim as their own. Because, unfortunately, in this country success rarely belongs to the hard workers. The future I do not know, but the present still belongs to Hendrik Röver and his people. I am a sick man… and Los Deltonos are my disease.

Marcos Sánchez

Nacho Vegas, “Vidas Semipreciosas” (Oso Polita)



Four long years ago, at the beginning of 2022, we stated, and rightly so, that “Mundos Inmóviles Derrumbándose” (Oso Polita) would be one of the most outstanding albums of that year. Now we repeat the claim after several listens to “Vidas Semipreciosas”, a record more varied in sound than usual. There was a great desire for new songs from the Asturian songwriter, and they arrive here on his ninth album, released just as his new tour begins.

The new record is more than semi-precious, something already evident from the remarkable advance singles. Tracks as heterogeneous as “Alivio”, which opens side A with a surprisingly upbeat rhythm and prominent keyboards. The most recent single, opening side B, is “Los Asombros”, another song full of emotion and reflection with rich poetic texture, more in line with his most emblematic work. Its beautiful melody highlights the wonder still found in small things, the “semi-precious” things, as Nacho puts it. It is inspired by a poem by Mary Oliver.

There are strong traditional Asturian folk elements and even a touching version of Mikel Laboa’s “Txoria Txori”, adapted to Asturias in both lyrics and music. Throughout the album there are many notable female backing vocals and excellent guitar work from Irazoki, plus a small gem featuring his “American” banjo. The album’s presentation also deserves mention: a beautiful edition with a double inner sleeve and a striking green vinyl, with illustrations that reminded me of “The Garden of Earthly Delights” by Bosch. A complete beauty in every sense.

Txema Mañeru

Gluecifer, “Same Drug New High” (Steamhammer)



A triumphant return from the Norwegian kings of rock’n’roll twenty-two years after their previous album, the acclaimed “Automatic Thrill”. Although they returned to the stage in 2018 in enviable form, it is in 2026 that that great record finally finds its continuation, proving that time seems not to have passed for Biff Malibu and company.

True to its title, the album is an adrenaline shot of high-energy rock’n’roll, just as the single “The Idiot”, which preceded the album, already suggested. The guitars of Raldo and Captain Poon roar furiously over the frantic rhythm section, continuing with another sonic punch in the title track. With little pause, Biff shows off his vocal power on the following cuts, particularly “The Score”, whose chorus is the kind one would happily live inside.

The pace eases slightly with “Pharmacity” and the more hard-rock oriented “Made in the Morning”, before ramping up again in the closing stretch with “Mind Control” and “Another Night, Another City”. A true celebration that leads to the perfect finale, “On the Wire”. A record that proves the Norwegians are still reigning by rightful claim. They will be here in March and… I’m counting the days.
Marcos Sánchez

Drugos, “Haz ruido mientras puedas” (Altafonte)



It is easy to get lost in the tangle of bands in the new wave of Spanish rock, where form often matters more than substance and posturing runs wild. That is not the case with the Asturian band Drugos (Jano, Luis, Ale and Nacho), who return with “Haz ruido mientras puedas”, their third album.

Let’s be honest: they are not the most handsome guys in the class, nor do they

radiate carefully rehearsed magnetism in photographs. But when you press play and Jano's voice fills the stereo you know there is no nonsense here, this is serious business. Their proposal is not formally groundbreaking, guitar-driven rock with clear national roots and a certain mainstream vocation, but their creative approach and technical skill make Drugos stand out, and by a long way, from the surrounding scene.

They are at their sharpest in "Dejarlo estar", the standout track for this reviewer, "M. Pombo", a powerful satirical critique of celebrity culture on social media and the political polarization in our country, or "Como el trigo". Their more melodic side appears in "Me han cortado la luz", "No queda tiempo", "Las amapolas" or "No tengo prisa". They have a strong leader, good songs, strong lyrics and plenty of personality. What more could life ask for.

Guillermo Alvah

Morfi Grei, "Tiempo Perdido En La Memoria" (Kasba Music)



What a great idea to recover perhaps the best solo work by Morfi Grei, just as two years have passed since his untimely death. Here we have the original 1984 EP "Aliento de Noches", remastered by Aurelio Morata (Los Rebeldes), with its five tracks beginning with "Cayendo" and ending with the title song.

To that legendary record eight live tracks with excellent sound have been added, recorded the same year when the band was in full form, along with an unreleased track left for listeners to discover. "Ciutat Podrida" by La Trapera sounds like a cannon blast. Alongside the EP tracks we also get the excellent "Monopatín" and the savage "Jim". The cover art by Xavier Julià, the other guitarist who accompanied Tío Modes, is also noteworthy.

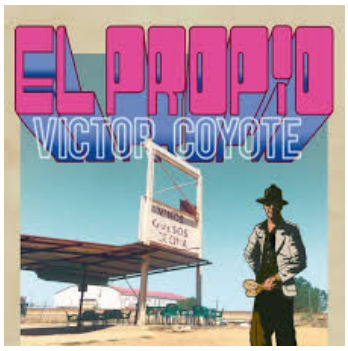
At the same time it is worth recommending the remastered 30th anniversary reissue of his third album "Mentemblanco". In its day it was somewhat misunderstood because of its "modern" cover, but the new edition with beautiful photos by Xavi Mercadé arranged as a collage and accompanied by period press clippings makes this version far more attractive. Tío Modes is brutal and Morfi still had all his strength intact. Incidentally, the two most historic Cicatriz albums have also



been reissued on vinyl, including the double live album "En Directo". And in white vinyl there is even the live album released this very 2025 by the Steve Ignorant Band, singer of the revolutionary Crass.

Txema Mañeru

El Verbo Odiado, "E.G.O." (Intromúsica)



The truth is I didn't know them until this, their fourth and most ambitious and varied album to date. It was preceded, and surrounded, by a number of singles. The fact is that El Verbo Odiado (E.G.O.) have been appearing high on several "best of the year" lists, and that is for a reason. Standout singles include the title track, released by Intromúsica, always with carefully produced vinyl editions and sometimes in different colors, accompanied by a striking video filmed inside a church. It is impressive how their three guitars intertwine with that powerful chorus you simply cannot help but love. The band from Huesca blends melancholy, resistance, emotion, introspection, and other elements to create songs and moments of great beauty.

This time they recorded with Santi García at Ultramarinos Costa Brava, aiming to explore the duality between love and hate, vulnerability and pride, and they succeeded. Honesty, rawness, and rage define the record. "K2" is another strong single, more melodic but with darker post-punk moments. "La Metamorfosis" follows a similar path, combining harsh guitars with a calm melody. The tough lyrics of "Canción Rota" open the album, which reaches its summit with "El Verbo Odiado", a magnificent slow track of over six minutes crowned by an epic and perfectly rounded chorus. Beautiful strings and piano appear in "Un Río Nuevo", an excellent closing track for a record and a band easy to love.

Txema Mañeru

Víctor Coyote, "El Propio" (El Volcán Música)
Although the wider public may never have realized it, veteran Víctor Coyote is one of the great figures in Spanish music. Not only in music, because he is also an accomplished illustrator and artist with several books published, and he has created the excellent artwork for his own records.

This necessary compilation gathers ten songs, some of them difficult to find until now, on carefully produced vinyl, including one unreleased track and three strong cover versions. It does not include material from his time leading the pioneering punkabilly and psychobilly band Los Coyotes. Instead, it focuses on his solo career, where he gradually incorporated Latin sounds and became a key figure in Latin rock.

There is rich salsa throughout, with stops along the way in cumbia, bachata, and plenty of Brazil and Puerto Rico. This self-declared disciple of Paco Ibáñez and Johnny Cash opens the collection with his latest single "Si Te Falta Calle", which had its own comic-street-single edition and carries a strong Manu Chao vibe. His lyrics are also a delight, full of irony and sharp humor, as heard in "Joven De Cuello Vuelto".

The covers include Amália Rodrigues' "Havemos De Ir A Viana", performed as a duet with Rita Braga, "Yo, El Extraño" by Takis Mousafiris, and the closing track "Puerto Rico En Mi Corazón" by Mort Shuman. The unreleased song is the bachata "Así Me Tratan Ahora", once again taking us to his beloved Puerto Rico. Among the highlights we also find two of the main hits from his previous album on El Volcán, "Las Comarcales". "Cumbia de Milagro" is a beautiful and sad cumbia that remains danceable, while "La Maravilla" is wonderful, with a 1950s feel somewhere between rockabilly and Los Hermanos Cubero, with guitars reminiscent of Chris Isaak. Another notable single is "Yo, Que Creo En El Diablo", echoing his beloved Johnny Cash. But listen to the whole thing, there are several more delights waiting.

Txema Mañeru

Santi Campos, "Ruinas de Interior" (Rock Indiana)
An artifact like this was more than necessary



to reflect the career of one of the greatest names in Spanish-language pop-rock of the last three decades. It brings together forty songs from every stage of his career across two CDs. Naturally, some tracks go back to his beginnings with Malconsejo, while others reach his most recent and varied solo works. There are also songs from projects such as Herederos or Amigos Imaginarios, where he recorded some of his finest compositions. Intelligent pop in all its variations, with lyrics far above average, especially within his style. The collection includes selected tracks from his LPs, some of his best singles, others previously available only on CD, and a few that had appeared exclusively on his Bandcamp. There are also eight previously unreleased songs, all with enough class and quality to stand alongside the rest. The most emblematic songs are present, but there are many pleasant surprises too.

The album opens powerfully with the guitar-driven "Universo", featuring raw guitars, a strong bass line, and carefully crafted backing vocals, all classic trademarks. "Daniel" is an excellent example of Santi's melancholic ballads, other examples here include "Lo Que Mueve Mi Mundo", the acoustic opening "Miss Invierno", and the eccentric "Balada Para Un Cuerdo". The song addresses a thorny and deeply personal subject that truly resonates.

There are also extended odysseys like "Superman" and "Los Chicos del Skate", with sharp guitar lines riding over an incisive organ and excellent piano work. There are hints of Bob Dylan in "Disco Del Mes", relatively well-known tracks such as "Tatuaje", and an original farewell with his version of Elliott Smith's "Between The Bars", transformed into his own cinematic interpretation titled "Entre Copas". A comprehensive panorama of this great songwriter, singer, and guitarist.

Txema Mañeru

Lima Negra, "Peligros" (Montgrí)
A delightful surprise from this duo from Granada, who clearly step away from the sounds most commonly associated with their city. Their territory is Latin rock, and Montgrí compares them to The Libertines transformed into Juan Perro and Willy DeVille. Not a bad comparison, though you could also mention Kiko Veneno, Los Fabulosos Cadillacs, Los Coyotes, or Andrés Calamaro. Their rise has been remarkably fast. Less than a year ago they introduced themselves with a spectacular double single featuring "Pena y Dolor" and "Me Dejó", the latter with the collaboration of Antonio Arias. "Pena y Dolor" also comes with an entertaining video. It opens with rich keyboards and a slow melody before transforming into a vibrant Latin rock piece in the style of Víctor Coyote, complete with a joyful chorus reminiscent of Vicentico's band, Los Fabulosos Cadillacs. "Me Dejó" begins with a beautiful acoustic and slightly flamenco-tinged introduction. Once again the



horns stand out, along with the phrases of the clumsy romantic anti-hero who narrates the album: "Me dejó por Soleares… me dejó tirado en los bares". Other sad love songs appear, such as "Día de Muertos", with its rich percussion and seductive rhythm reminiscent of Calamaro.

Side B opens with "A Volar", featuring more Andalusian and flamenco influences, handclaps, and a fine flamenco guitar that shows clear respect for the best Kiko Veneno. The rest of the side deals even more bluntly with love and relationships, with titles such as "Regalo Envenenado", "Teoría del Arrepentimiento", or the painful "Te Dolió". Honest and fearless, without any double meanings. Brave.

Txema Mañeru

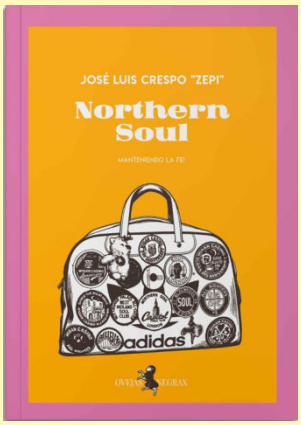
Lionel Hampton, "Live in Paris 1956-1962" (Frémeaux & Associés)
Another chapter in the excellent "Live in Paris" collection, featuring many of the greatest American jazz musicians of the mid-twentieth century, Coltrane, Armstrong, Basie, Bechet, Hawkins, Thelonious Monk, Quincy Jones, among others.

This new volume offers more than two hours of music drawn from two legendary concerts by the greatest vibraphonist of all time, who was also an outstanding drummer and percussionist. The recordings come from 1956 and 1961 respectively, and together include thirty tracks, most of them composed by Hampton himself. He radiates energy and enthusiasm during what were among the best years of his career. A great entertainer, but also a superb artist, musician, composer, and bandleader. The result is lively, danceable jazz with gems such as "Panama", "Memories Of You", the ever-moving "Hallelujah", "Blues For Sacha", "Patricia's Boogie", "Midnight Sun", "Tenderly", "On The Sunny Side Of The Street", and the more than eight-minute rendition of the traditional "When The Saints". There are also highlights such as the ten-minute "10 Rue Caumartin", along with compositions by classics like Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Irving Berlin with "Alexander's Ragtime Band". Jazz, blues, boogie, and ragtime performed with great musicians and singers, featuring rich sections of trombones, trumpets, and various saxophones.

Txema Mañeru

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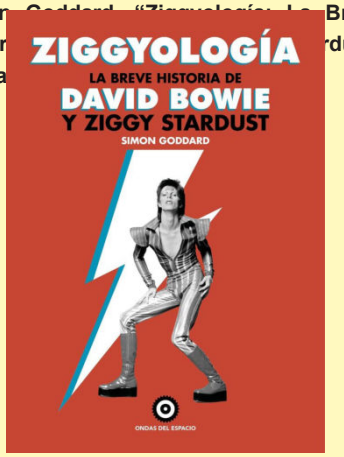
"Northern Soul, Manteniendo LA Fe!", José Luis Crespo "Zepi" (Ovejas Negrax)



There are books that organize facts and others that organize passions. This guide, published by the combative imprint Ovejas Negrax, belongs unmistakably to the latter category. Across its pages, Northern Soul ceases to be a vague label and becomes an emotional cartography: clubs such as Wigan Casino and The Twisted Wheel, decisive DJs, the mythology of the "cover up", amphetamines, talcum powder, and white T-shirts as tribal uniform. The analysis does not shy away from the darker side or the decline, nor from the nineties revival and its reflection in cinema. Everything is contextualized with precision and narrative drive. Zepi, one of the leading contributors to Rock Bottom Magazine, delivers a work that breathes knowledge and devotion. It is no coincidence that he has spent years sustaining the regular section "Keep the Soul Alive" and already demonstrated his authority in 2023 with "Escuchate Esto! 75 Joyas de la Música Soul", alongside Tony Vardé. Here he does it again: rigor, passion, and memory in their purest state. Essential.

Javistone

Simon Goddard, "Ziggyología: La Breve Historia de David Bowie y Ziggy Stardust" (Ondas del Espacio)

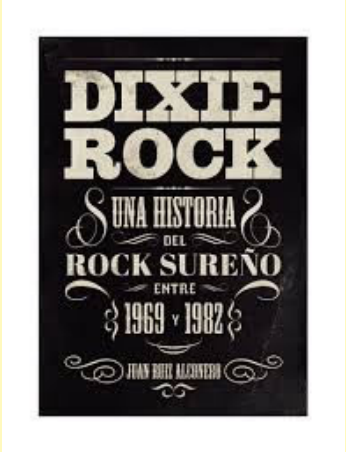


It is not at all far-fetched to say that this book is the "Encyclopedia" of Bowie's legendary album "Ziggy Stardust". For many, it is his best record and certainly the most influential and decisive in his career. It is a key work of glam rock, although I might like "Hunky Dory" even more. I love the advice printed by the publisher, Ondas del Espacio: "To be read at maximum volume". Across its rich 350 pages, there is a fully photographic 16-page chapter titled "How a Starman Is Created". Among its excellent black-and-white photographs, several of Bowie himself, of course, we also find musicians such as Little Richard, Vince Taylor, and Iggy Pop, as well as Andy Warhol, the cowboy Stardust, and Alex and his companions from "A Clockwork Orange". There are also images of the street featured on the album cover and the telephone booth on the back sleeve. The original English edition was published in 2013, and the current Spanish translation has been skillfully handled by Javier Peleteiro. It comes in hardcover with a beautiful cover design. Goddard is also the author of another outstanding book published by Ondas del Espacio, "The Smiths 1982-87. Canciones Que Te Salvaron La Vida", which received extremely well-deserved critical acclaim. He is a Bowie expert, and it shows. He is also the creator of the "Bowie Odyssey" series. "Bowie Odyssey 70" was named Book of the Year by The Sunday Times. Here we have the complete guide to how David Bowie shaped one of the most famous characters in rock history, Ziggy Stardust. The book now appears in Spanish ten years after Bowie's death, although he remains more alive than ever. His first "death" came much earlier, when he killed Ziggy Stardust live on stage, the greatest invention in pop music history, the rock god who came from the stars and struck young Bowie like a bolt from the sky. This is two books in one, explaining who Ziggy Stardust really was and where he came from. It also explores why Bowie had to kill him. Book I is titled "The Coming of the Starman" and Book II is titled "The Earth Beneath the Starman". Between them lies the previously mentioned photographic chapter explaining how the character was created. This is supreme pop archaeology, unraveling all the influences that gave life to Ziggy, from Elvis and Little Richard to Iggy Pop, from kabuki to Kubrick and "A Clockwork Orange", and from H. G. Wells to Holst. An epic yet brief drama marked by its turbulent stay among us. A solid explanatory Prologue and a definitive Epilogue titled "Dead London". Not only London died; Bowie's absence has left many people orphaned all over the world.

Txema Mañeru

Juan Ruiz Alconero, "Dixie Rock" (Lenoir Ediciones)

It is hard to believe that this book could be the



work of a promising debut author like Juan Ruiz Alconero. Especially since it tackles a style about which very little has been written in Spanish, although there are some books about the genre's main figures such as The Allman Brothers and Lynyrd Skynyrd, or even excellent heirs like The Black Crowes. A book like this, with this level of quality and such detailed information about Southern rock, was enormously necessary here. We have 370 pages packed with information about the style. Most of it focuses on those legendary late 1960s and 1970s bands, but we are speaking of a genre that remains very much alive today. The core of the book concentrates on the period between 1969 and 1982, its most glorious years. In fact, its explanatory subtitle is "A History of Southern Rock Between 1969 and 1982". Rock 'n' roll comes from the southern United States, and sixteen of the first twenty musicians inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame came from that region. Within this style, alongside The Allman Brothers, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and The Marshall Tucker Band, we find diverse acts such as Molly Hatchet, Dan Penn, Cowboy, Delbert McClinton, ZZ Top, Wet Willie, and solo artists like Duane Allman, Levon Helm, and Gregg Allman. This highly recommended book offers the complete history of the genre, information about the studios that shaped the Southern sound, and the trajectory of more than eighty bands and musicians and their recordings, with a total of 300 annotated and evaluated references. Historical context, anecdotes, and musical insights into a style that successfully blended country, blues, rock, and soul, along with abundant Southern iconography. All albums are reviewed with their respective covers, and there are also 28 glossy pages featuring mostly color photographs of the groups analyzed, thoroughly and well, by Dr. Juan. By the time you read this, another highly recommended Lenoir book will have been released: "Blind Faith: El Primer Supergrupo". by Marcelo Gobello, who has also authored other notable books for Lenoir, including titles on Ramones, Peter Hammill & Van Der Graaf Generator, Rory Gallagher, and, most recently, Dr. Feelgood.

Txema Mañeru



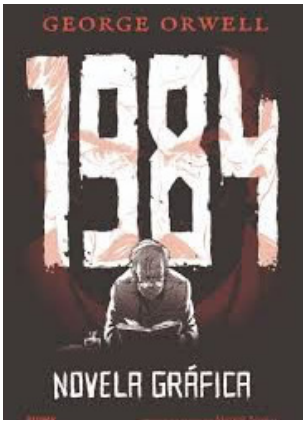
Julio Valdeón, "Darkness On The Edge Of Town. Springsteen En El Corazón De La Tormenta" (Efe Eme)

The truth is that I am deeply fond of Efe Eme's books, but especially of their outstanding "Colección Elepé". Recently, it has featured key albums by essential bands such as "London Calling". by The Clash, written by Fernando Ballesteros, or Sara Morales' take on "¿Cuándo Se Come Aquí?", the debut and essential album by Siniestro Total. Both are fully recommended. However, there have also been books devoted to albums that were not as significant within the respective artists' careers. Such is the case of "Slow Train Coming". by Bob Dylan, far from being one of his finest records, though extremely interesting for analyzing his personality and his religious "transformations", which make that book equally compelling. In this case, although "Darkness On The Edge Of Town". is one of Bruce's finest albums, it does not occupy a place on my personal podium. I would reserve that for "The River", "Nebraska", and "Born To Run", in that order. Still, one must acknowledge the enormous importance of this album in shaping his later trajectory and in defining his music and storytelling. Julio Valdeón's strong authorship, who has other recommended books with the publisher, including a couple on Joaquín Sabina, makes this volume especially valuable. Boss fans will be delighted with this special book, which I believe is the most extensive in the collection, reflecting the album's huge importance. Its creation also led to the excellent "The Promise". in 2010, and that entire episode is discussed in depth.

Txema Mañeru

Matyáš Namai, "1984-George Orwell". / "Chernóbil". / "El Sendero del Dalái Lama" (Blume)

I have always loved comics since childhood. Later, I became fascinated with the graphic novel format, which I discovered four decades ago through "A Contract With God". by the great Will Eisner, creator of Spirit. It has therefore been a delight that the publishing house Blume,

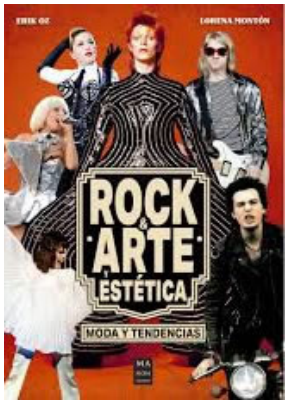


known for its luxurious and carefully produced editions, has joined the publication of this format, releasing three graphic novels by the renowned Czech-Japanese illustrator Matyáš Namai simultaneously. We begin with the most extensive and, for me, the most recommended: the classic "1984". by George Orwell. A complete new interpretation capturing all its horror and its rich thematic depth. Big Brother, the Thought Police, thoughtcrime, doublethink, all part of one of the greatest dystopias in world literature. Its impact resonates strongly with what we are living through today. "Chernóbil. La Caída de Atomgrad". tells, once again with beautiful artwork, how the "Atoms for Peace". program devolved into the creation of a radioactive cloud that terrified the entire world. A harrowing account of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster, portraying the many deeply human stories affected by the tragedy: engineers, firefighters, doctors, soldiers, children, families, towns, villages, even animals. The high cost of political ambition and arrogance. Finally, we have "El Sendero del Dalái Lama", created in collaboration with Tom Taylor. Surprisingly, it has become the first graphic novel blessed by His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama. Here we encounter the extraordinary life of this great spiritual leader, a figure committed to compassion and peace. The work stands as a tribute to the resilience of the human spirit and the transformative power of kindness. If only we had some political leaders closer to these principles.

Txema Mañeru

Erik Oz / Lorena Montón, "Rock & arte y estética" (Redbook Ediciones)

Here we have another visual gem from the LOOK Collection by Ma Non Troppo, within Redbook Ediciones. A true delight, perfectly summarized by its definition: "Music is listened to, but it is also worn". The book explores the vast majority of urban tribes, leading us all the way to the phenomenon of fandom. It spans eight decades, decades during which music set the rhythm of fashion, allowing youth to reinvent their identity before the mirror and on stage. A colorful, agile, fully visual edition intertwining history, aesthetics, and sociology. Two hundred and sixty-four full-color pages on glossy paper,



packed with "Fashion and Trends". The cover already features iconic images of Bowie, Sid Vicious, Kurt Cobain, Madonna, and Freddie Mercury. Lady Gaga's words appear on the back cover. Essential chapters include "The Birth of a New Youth Style", "The British Invasion", "The Arrival of the Hippies", "Disco Music", "The Rise of Rap and Pop Culture", "Grunge, Britpop and Social Disenchantment", and "The New Millennium". In this final chapter, we encounter the Queer awakening and the aesthetics of the outskirts: from the street to the mainstream. There are also numerous QR codes providing access to excellent and highly visual videos related to the topics discussed. Erik Oz's texts are fully worthy of a work that is not only visually striking, even if that is what first captures our attention.

Txema Mañeru

Metal and Rock
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1976: America on the Couch



The 50th issue of this publication you enjoy at a modest price coincides with the 50th birthday of the undersigned, and it felt necessary to look back at 1976 to see what our beloved Tinseltown was up to. In these pages we have sniffed around the thriller and the western, two almost antagonistic ways of seeing cinema, but there is far more territory left to explore.

1976: the United States turns two hundred and does not quite know whether to celebrate with fireworks, in an Alcoholics Anonymous session, or lying on a couch, sniffling. Vietnam has left scars that patriotic makeup cannot conceal. Watergate has revealed that the villains are white, Anglo-Saxon, and wear ties. A moral hangover batters a country that is beginning to suspect the story it has been told about itself may be a lie.

Against that background noise, American cinema finds itself in a strange moment: abundant creative freedom, disoriented studios, and an audience eager to see itself reflected on screen without renouncing spectacle. It is the swan song of New Hollywood, that brief utopia in which directors took the wheel while executives were still looking for the car keys.

1976 was no ordinary year. It was a genuine crossroads. Auteur cinema coexisted with the embryonic blockbuster. Altman and Spielberg could still look each other in the eye. Nihilism blended with escapism. Classic genres were reformulated with a mean streak. Paranoid thrillers, unhinged horror, twilight westerns, uncomfortable comedies, dramas about broken characters, and science fiction beginning to intuit a digital future. All this unfolded while America tried to convince itself the dream still stood, even as cracks appeared in the foundations.

The shockwave of New Hollywood still reverberated, a brief explosion that overturned what had once seemed immovable. By the mid-seventies, the major studios resembled aging stars shuffling into the Betty Ford Clinic. After the collapse of the classic studio system in the sixties, executives had learned one lesson: the young call the shots, or at least they buy the tickets. That is why figures such as Martin Scorsese, Brian De Palma, and John Schlesinger were given room to engage with uncomfortable themes, risky structures, and morally dubious characters.

The problem was that creative freedom did



"Tarde de perros"

not always come with balanced accounts. Studios oscillated between panic and hope. They needed hits, yet hits were increasingly unpredictable. The lesson of the decade was clear: a film could be a masterpiece or a financial black hole. That is how personal projects could coexist with high-concept attempts designed to lure the youth filling multiplexes.

In that sense, 1976 was a year of transition. Directors were still allowed to sink their teeth into national miseries, but the industrial logic that would crystallize the following year with the blockbuster model was already visible. Cinema was beginning to smell of popcorn, but it still smelled of ashtrays.

The United States reached its bicentennial with a fractured soul. Vietnam was not only a military defeat but a moral one broadcast in prime time. Watergate turned the president into a paranoid thriller character. The oil crisis revealed that progress has an expiration date. The streets, marked by protests, racial tensions, and youthful disenchantment, hardly resembled the set of Mary Poppins.

That climate seeped into cinema in a viscous way. The thriller became paranoid because the enemy was no longer external but embedded within the system. Drama abandoned classical heroism in favor of wounded, contradictory, even self-destructive protagonists. Horror left Gothic castles behind and moved into suburban homes. And the western, that foundational genre, looked in the mirror and recognized that its epic was built on violence, racism, and uncomfortable silences.

By 1976, American cinema no longer believed in pure heroes. It believed in survivors, in men doing what they could with what they had, in characters who hesitated before pulling the trigger or fired precisely because they hesitated too long. The mid-seventies viewer was not the same as a decade earlier. They had seen corpses on television, heard politicians lie with toothpaste smiles, and learned to distrust grandiose rhetoric. They needed two seemingly contradictory things: emotional truth and total escape. They wanted the system's rot exposed, but also to leave the theater believing the world might still be saved. Illusions die hard.

Thus harsh, uncomfortable films coexisted with narratives that were more classical, even optimistic. Not contradiction, but emotional negotiation. Audiences were not naïve, yet they were unwilling to relinquish epic storytelling altogether. Cinema oscillated between social autopsy and personal redemption, between political paranoia and near-mythological adventure.

In recent issues we have discussed the conspiratorial thriller, films where threats are diffuse, institutions are suspect, and protagonists are ordinary men trapped in machinery too complex for them. Distrust of power becomes the narrative engine. Conspiracies, espionage, media manipulation. What once seemed exaggerated now felt like headlines. The thriller ceased to be mere entertainment and became political X-ray. Tension arose not only from chases or twists but from the sense that reality itself was rigged. In films such as "All the President's Men", "Network", and "Marathon Man", all released in 1976, there are no certainties, only versions. The viewer, like the protagonist, learns to look over their shoulder.

Drama in 1976 was intimate and brutal in equal measure. It moved away from classical melodrama toward psychological portraits of individuals struggling to survive hostile environments. Stories of guilt, impossible redemption, urban loneliness. The city ceased to be a promise of progress and became an emotional labyrinth. Films like "Rocky", "Dog Day Afternoon", and "A Woman Under the Influence" did not console, they confronted. Heroism became daily survival, and triumph meant not giving up entirely.

> ***"El espectador de mediados de los setenta no es el mismo que el de la década anterior. Ha visto cadáveres en la televisión, ha escuchado a políticos mentir con sonrisa Profiden y ha aprendido a desconfiar de los discursos grandilocuentes."***

Comedy also shifted. No longer pure escapism, it became neurotic, almost therapeutic. Laughter carried subtext and bite. Relationships, urban intellectualism, masculine insecurity in a rapidly changing world. Films such as "Shampoo", "Silver Streak", and "What's Up, Doc?" delivered sharp dialogue and frenetic rhythms. Neurosis became comic raw material, love a psychological battlefield. Identity emerged as a puzzle, modernity as a source of anxiety.

It was no coincidence that two of the most terrifying films in history premiered that year: "Carrie" and "The Omen". Horror definitively abandoned Transylvanian castles and entered the domestic sphere. The threat was internal, familial, corporeal. Violence grew more graphic yet more symbolic, designed not only to frighten but to unsettle. The American dream, with its house and lawn, began to look fragile.



The western of 1976 was an act of reckoning. Clint Eastwood in “The Outlaw Josey Wales” dissected it, Don Siegel in “The Shootist” buried it. There was no naïve glorification of the frontier. Gunslingers aged, ideals eroded, the frontier became problematic memory. As the nation reconsidered its global role after Vietnam, the genre reconsidered its foundational myth. Epic turned melancholic, nostalgia became guilt.

Adventure films offered a valve of escape. Journeys, physical challenges, personal triumphs, like “The Wind and the Lion” or “The Man Who Would Be King”. Meanwhile disaster cinema surged with “The Towering Inferno” and “Earthquake”. Even science fiction embraced dystopia, not as mere speculation but as political metaphor. Films like “Futureworld”, “Logan’s Run”, and “Silent Running” grappled with surveillance, dehumanization, and ethical anxiety about progress.





1976 represents one of the last moments when New Hollywood breathed with relative autonomy before the industrial model shifted. Directors still had voices, scripts embraced moral ambiguity, endings were not always reassuring. It was adult, uncomfortable cinema that trusted the viewer’s intelligence. Yet on the horizon loomed another logic: total spectacle, global product, astronomical box-office returns. Auteur cinema within the system began to seem risky. New Hollywood did not die overnight. It dissolved.

To look at American cinema in 1976 is to look at a country trying to reassemble itself without knowing how. Genres rewrote themselves to engage with murkier realities. Characters became uncomfortable mirrors. It was cinema that allowed doubt, that questioned and sometimes unsettled rather than pacified. And therein lies its greatness. Before the blockbuster machine imposed its franchise logic, there was a brief, intense, contradictory moment when Hollywood wrestled with moral uncertainty and sought to reckon with its own foundational myth.

1976 is not just a year of films. It is a collective state of mind captured on 35 mm, with the scent of disillusion floating over each frame and hope, stubborn and resilient, refusing to vanish entirely.

Javier Sanabria

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PODCAST
Presentado por
Roberto Martínez

Lisa Dominique “Rock and roll lady”



Those with longer memories will remember how, in the late 80s, rocker Lisa Dominique burst onto the scene. She left her brother’s band to go solo, and she did so with major impact. Lisa’s videos were in heavy rotation on MTV, she rubbed shoulders with major rock stars in the UK, and she was on the covers of magazines. But with the change of decade and shifting musical tastes, Lisa moved to Los Angeles to focus on other business ventures that have gone just as well for her as music did. The Metal N’ Rock team contacted her at Christmas and shortly afterwards she replied with an attention and kindness worth mentioning. As is our custom, we’re sharing this interview with the distinguished readers of Rock Bottom Magazine.

In the mid-80s you moved from your hometown to London to dedicate yourself to music. How do you remember that time? What was the music scene like in London back then?

It was fantastic. I was lucky because my brother, the guitarist Marino, was already established on the London music scene. So when I moved there, I was able to experience the whole rock and roll scene straight away. It was pretty amazing. In fact, when I joined Marino’s band that same year, ’85, the rock scene in London was really buzzing. The Marquee Club was literally a launching pad for bands and singers, which meant you were truly part of the London music scene back then, and there were endless parties, you know, invitations to MTV events, record label promotions. Something was always happening. Very often on Marino’s show nights we’d run into people we loved like Ozzy and Robert Plant, and I became friends with many musicians I truly admired, people like Lemmy, John Sykes or Mick Ronson, real rock legends. Some of them are gone now, but I’ll never forget them.

Initially you joined your brother Marino’s band. How did your solo project come about, leaving his band behind?

I had an incredible time with Marino. His band made me realize, shortly after joining, just how much I wanted to write, sing and perform. Marino was signed to Lionel Barnes, who was running the rock musical Quasimodo, which meant he had to take six months away from the band. That’s when we talked about it and he suggested that it was probably the right time for me to go out on my own, which is what I did. I formed a band, wrote new material and played countless shows all over the UK, which led to FM Revolver and some other labels approaching me and offering a deal with creative control, basically what I wanted, so I decided to go for it.

In 1989 you debuted with “Rock and Roll Lady” and it was a success, with heavily played singles and magazine covers like Metal Hammer and Kerrang. We imagine that meant a big change in popularity in your life.

When I recorded “Rock and Roll Lady” I couldn’t wait to release it and I wanted to create the same kind of energy I gave off in my live shows. We managed for me to produce the record, and my intention was for it to sound similar to Motörhead, since I loved how they sounded. It was also fantastic to have Marino in the studio contributing guitars because, you know, he wasn’t your typical rock and roll guitarist. I was really excited for the record to come out. It was absolutely non-stop, doing multiple TV and radio appearances in England. Besides appearing in Kerrang and Metal Hammer, I was featured in national newspapers. It was pretty incredible, to be honest. Then SM Revolver released my video “All Fall Down” and MTV put it into rotation, which was absolutely amazing. I have to say, one of my proudest moments in rock and roll was when I was asked to headline the closing night of the legendary Marquee Club. It was a huge honor. No one wanted to leave, I remember it clearly. We kept playing song after song, and even my dear friend Lemmy joined me on stage. Together we ended up playing “Johnny Be Good”. Those were incredible and very special memories that I’ll never forget.

In 1991 you released “Gypsy Rider”, a record with a somewhat different sound. What can you tell us about it? What differences do you see between that second album and your debut?

After finishing the promotion for “Rock and Roll Lady” the following summer, I wanted to focus on writing more songs, even though I had only signed a one-album deal with FM Revolver. I loved the idea of recording my next album in New York. I felt very comfortable taking my time playing guitar

and writing. When I finished writing "Gypsy Rider" in November, I was really eager to record it. I deeply felt the strong melodies and lyrics I had written, a very deep sense of emotion that later seemed to resonate with a wide audience.

To record the album, I went to New York where I met multi-platinum producer David Prater, who had just produced Firehouse's debut album, which topped the charts in the USA. He loved my songs and was especially impressed with the track "Gypsy Rider". Not long after we met, I was recording the album with Dave in New York. It was a great experience. We asked Marino to fly over and join us to play all the guitars. We also had the fantastic bassist Buddy Allen from Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, who played the rhythm section alongside Glen Burnett. There was a really good vibe in the studio and Dave knew it. I wanted him to produce the album with a more classic rock sound.

And again, just like with "Rock and Roll Lady", the album made it into rock charts around the world. We started another UK tour and a European tour with more dates and sold-out shows, you know, TV and radio everywhere. We played some great festivals. We did some incredible shows in Spain with Saxon and other shows with Nazareth. Something I loved was that some of the performances from the "Gypsy Rider" tour were included in cool compilations like "Metal Mania", alongside Motörhead and Girlschool, or "Wheels of Steel" with Black Sabbath and Nazareth. Great memories of everything I lived through back then.

After the release of your second album and its corresponding tour, you disappeared from the music scene, which had changed drastically. What did you do during the 90s? Was that when you and your husband decided to focus on wine production?

After the "Gypsy Rider" tour, we went on a trip to the United States to relax for a couple of weeks, but Michael (my husband) and I ended up staying there for six weeks. As much as I loved London, I felt so good in Los Angeles that we eventually moved there. But as far as my career was concerned, the music scene had changed, and very quickly. I formed a band for a short time and headlined some really interesting sold-out shows at the Roxy and the Whisky a Go Go. The fans were great and the reviews were very positive. But to be honest, I realized the music scene had changed and I decided to take a break from rock for a while. That was when I started getting more involved in the wine business. We already had a wine called "Vampire Wine" and we had the Vampire brand in the beverage industry. I began working on our wines, creating logos and designs that really caught the attention of the entertainment industry. We had a great billboard on Sunset Boulevard featuring me drinking wine, and the slogan said: A Taste of Immortality. We went from Billboard to Miramax Films, who called us to ask if we could be the official wine for the premiere of "From Dusk Till Dawn", a vampire movie produced by Quentin Tarantino, which was a big success. After that, we were asked to sponsor other vampire movie premieres. We did it with "Blade" starring Wesley Snipes, the "Underworld" saga with Kate Beckinsale, and "Dark Shadows" with Johnny Depp, just to name a few. Then, in 2011, we were able to open the Pie Lounge wine bar in Beverly Hills, which turned out to be a big success and a hotspot for many celebrities and private events.



We've seen that you also started a career as a writer of vampire novels. Where did that inspiration come from? Did it have anything to do with your third album "Vampire Love"?

It was around the time we opened the wine venue that I was inspired to write my vampire novel. "A Walk in the Sun" was the book. I had already had the story in my head for years before writing it. So it was really rewarding to bring all the characters in the book to life, and I decided to publish it through our vampire wine company, which made sense because we have a big vampire fan base, and it was amazing. The reviews were overwhelmingly positive. Critics compared "A Walk in the Sun" to Bram Stoker's "Dracula". They also selected my book as one of the top five independent publications of that year. My book was nominated for Best Horror Novel by Forge Reviews. I really pushed my book within the industry and got it onto shelves throughout the state last year. I released a special tenth anniversary edition to celebrate. It continues to be a success. I included an excerpt from the upcoming sequel that I'm currently working on. Anyone who wants to check it out can go to vampire.com or awalkinthesun.com. Regarding your question about "Vampire Love", it wasn't actually the release of a third album. It was a promotion for our vampire energy drink and red vodka. At the time, Boy George from Culture Club did a remix of the song "Vampire Love", which was intended exclusively for dance clubs, and that really helped boost our sales in the nightclub industry across the United States, which was fantastic.

> ***We managed for me to produce the record, and my intention was for it to sound similar to Motörhead, since I loved how they sounded. It was also fantastic to have Marino in the studio contributing guitars because, you know, he wasn't your typical rock and roll guitarist.***

In 1991 you performed in Spain for the first time alongside Saxon. What do you remember about that visit?

I loved it, and I still love touring Spain. Watching the people, the landscapes, you know, the beautiful cities, the whole atmosphere, and I also love football. I'm still a big follower of La Liga, but I wish we had done more shows. We had a great promoter in Spain at the time, Robert Mills, but as you know, that ended when I moved to Los Angeles in '92. I've enjoyed incredible holidays and business trips in Spain. In fact, we have a Vampire Sangria from Spain. I love mixing business with pleasure. The memories of the shows with Saxon are very good.

As for today's music, do you follow the scene? There are many more women in rock now, quite the opposite of when you started. Is there any band or singer that catches your attention?

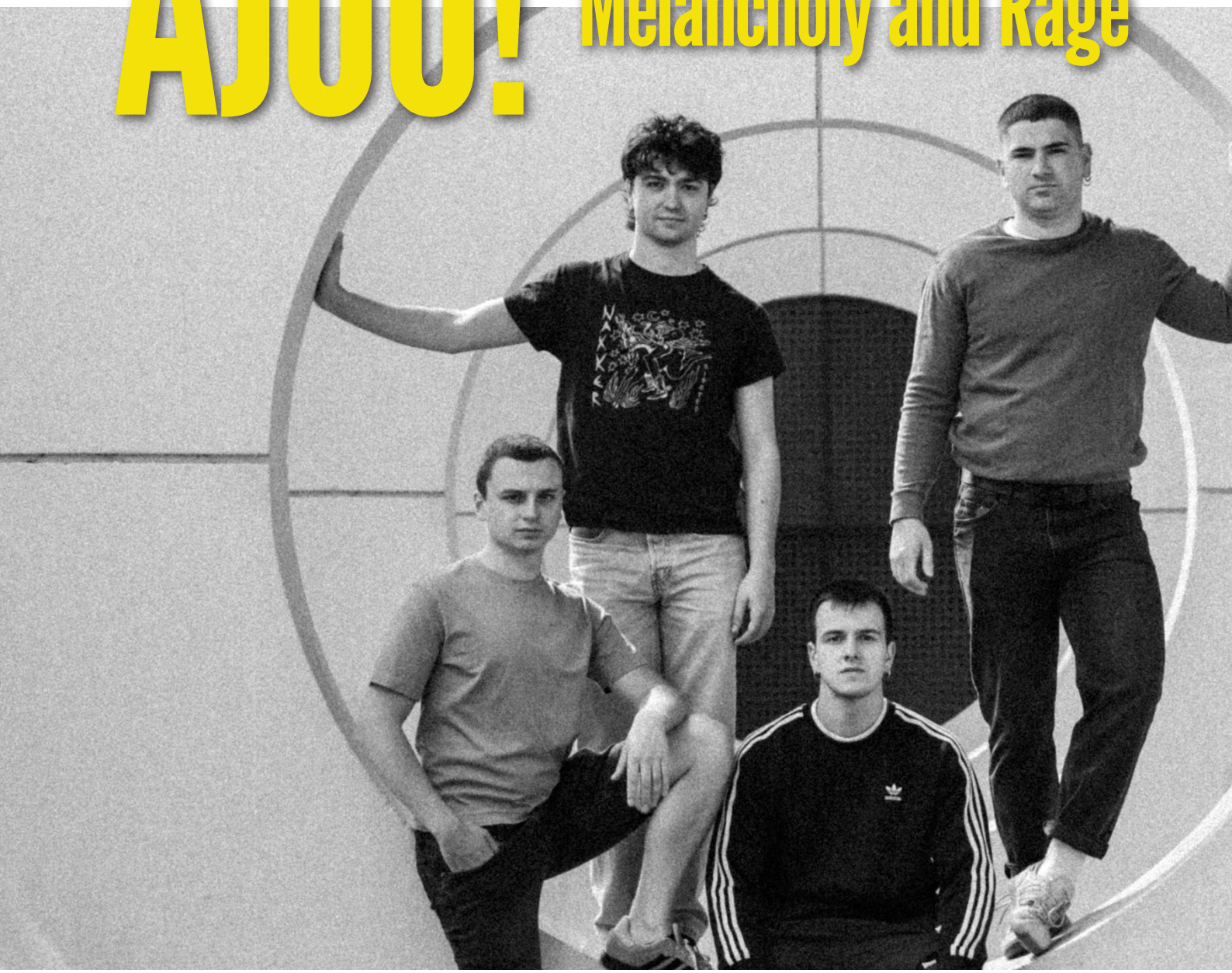
It's been great to see the rise of women in rock, and I love good music. It doesn't matter what genre it fits into for me, you know, hard rock, country rock, or blues. Right now, I love the album "Whirlwind" by Lainey Wilson, but I have to say I still have my all-time favorites, which are Stevie Nicks and Chrissie Hynde.

To finish, have you ever thought about returning to music? We remember your shows at the Marquee. Were those concerts recorded? Is there any possibility of releasing them someday?

Well, at the moment I'm not considering returning to live performance, but never say never. What I can say is that I'm very excited about reissuing my album "Gypsy Rider" this year. I've just finished digitally remastering it at the fantastic Sony Bakery recording studio here in Los Angeles. I can't wait for my fans to enjoy it again and to gain some new fans over here too. So yes, it's going to be a lot of fun. As for the Marquee, unfortunately I don't have any video footage of those concerts, only photos and memories from the fans.

Metal N' Rock Radio

AJOU! Melancholy and Rage



The Navarrese band AJOU! were one of the sensations of the latest edition of the Monkey Week festival. These four young (very young) musicians caught our attention with their intricate mix of melancholic pop in the vein of The Smiths or The Cure, combined with the fury of classic Basque punk. And to top it all off, when they told us they had just arrived after driving across the country in a van, in the middle of a snowstorm, to come and play in El Puerto de Santa María, they completely won us over. So we had no choice but to get in touch with them and have them tell us their (so far) short but intense story.

I understand you haven't been together as a band for very long. How did AJOU! come about? What's your story?

The AJOU! project emerged in 2024 as the result of a rather unusual situation. At that time, the four members of AJOU! were part of another musical project called Sustrai Berriak. However, that same year, the band's singer decided to move to Angola for a year to work, thanks to a scholarship. Faced with the uncertainty of what to do during his absence, we chose to keep rehearsing so we wouldn't lose our edge when it came to composing and playing. That was when we began experimenting with other styles, breaking away from previous dynamics and discovering new sounds. As we started composing new material, the idea of creating a different project began to take shape, which eventually became AJOU!.

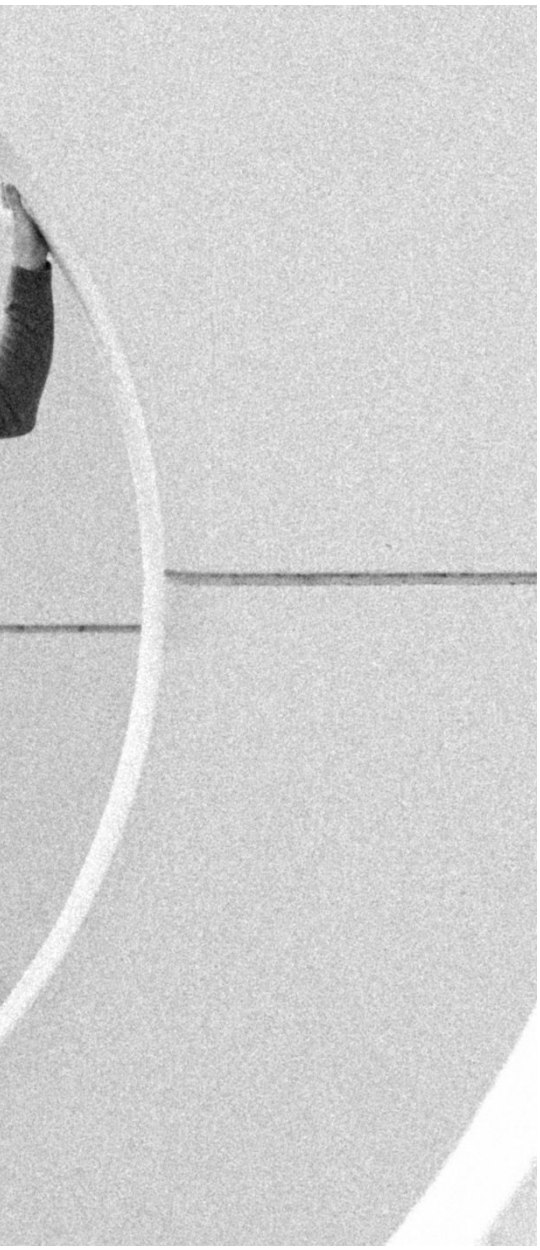
So this isn't your first musical project?

No. All four of us have been part of different musical projects, ranging from Mexican music groups to punk bands. However, what brings us all together is that we coincided in another project called Sustrai Berriak, which is still active and with which we also perform live. Even so, they are two completely different styles. In that sense, AJOU! opened a window through which fresh air came in.

How would you define the band's sound? What references have influenced you?

I would define our sound as a mix between punk and pop, between rage and melancholy, between distortion and clean melody. For us, one of the most important references in this style at a national level is Biznaga and, in our area, bands like Tatxers.

Your lyrics address current issues that reflect your generation's feelings. Do you think rock needs a new push in order to reach younger generations?



These are not particularly prosperous times. However, as in every field, music also goes through trends, and trends move in cycles. So styles that are barely heard today may come back tomorrow. In fact, in recent years we've noticed a rise in bands with clear sonic references to groups —especially British ones— from the 70s and 80s, with cleaner guitars and a strong presence of chorus effects, reminiscent of those iconic bands from the Anglo-Saxon scene.

In your songs you mix lyrics in Spanish and Basque. Do you feel equally comfortable in both languages, or do you have a preference?

In our previous musical projects, Basque was almost entirely dominant in our songs, largely because of the influence of the bands we listened to growing up, belonging to earlier generations who composed exclusively in Basque. For us it has always been something natural, never forced. And even if it hadn't been, we would have done it anyway out of political and cultural commitment to a minority language that deserves to be cared for and protected. However, with AJOU! we've wanted to experiment in every sense, both with new sounds and with the use of Spanish. It hasn't been difficult for us to start writing in this language either, since many of our current musical influences are bands who sing in Spanish.

So far you've recorded two EPs with nine songs. Are there more songs in the works?

That's right. In 2026 our intention is to play live, make ourselves known and release some merchandise. Maybe we'll also put out a single towards the end of the year, who knows… In any case, we don't want to rush ourselves. We believe the best songs aren't the ones you force, but the ones that cook slowly and arrive when they're meant to. We also think that between one album and the next it's necessary to live experiences, listen to a lot of new music and reach new personal conclusions that feed into that second record. If we were to compose one album after another without stopping, what new things could we possibly say?

We had the chance to see you live at the last edition of Monkey Week. Tell us, what were your impressions of playing at a festival like that?

For us, it was fucking amazing. Playing so far from home, surrounded by friends, and seeing the venue packed, with people dancing to our songs, has been one of the most rewarding experiences we've ever had. On top of that, we loved the festival itself: there were dozens of stages in unconventional locations like cathedrals, wineries, bumper car pavilions, and so on. It was incredible to see concerts in places like that. What we liked most about the festival was that it gave loads of opportunities to emerging bands like us, and that the audience attending was genuinely interested in the music scene. We met a lot of people who told us they had already listened to our songs before coming, that they were really disappointed they couldn't make it to the show, or that they had completely freaked out at the concert. We even ended up chatting with quite a few of them about "geeky" music stuff. At a time when macro-festivals and "fast food" culture are growing so much, finding a festival where people show up out of pure artistic curiosity and truly value the work you do is something very rare.

How did the opportunity to play at the festival come about?

For the past few years, there's been an office run by the Government of Navarre dedicated to promoting Navarrese artists and offering them guidance. From time to time, they also open calls to play at different festivals across the country. Thanks to one of those calls, we were able to apply to play at Monkey Week, and it was the festival's own partners who selected us to be part of the lineup.

Was it the first time you played outside your home region? Are you planning to play in more places around the country soon?

Apart from Monkey Week in El Puerto de Santa María, all the other shows we've played have been in Euskal Herria, where there are conditions and plenty of self-managed spaces where an emerging band can play and make itself known. We'd love to play outside our land again, because the experience in Cádiz was really beautiful, but we do see that unless it's within a festival framework or in a venue you know you can fill, it's very complicated.

Navarre has produced, and continues to produce, great rock bands. No one overlooks legendary names like Barricada, Tahúres Zurdos, Lehendakaris Muertos, Mermaid, Tijuana in Blue, Berri Txarrak, El Columpio Asesino or Chica Sobresalto. Do you feel the responsibility of carrying that legacy on your shoulders?

Even though they're great bands from Navarre, we don't feel a direct responsibility for that legacy. We've enjoyed them and listened to them since we were kids, but as a small, emerging band we've always surrounded ourselves with projects similar to ours and with closer, neighborhood cultural spaces. If we feel any responsibility, it's to defend and give visibility to all those small bands and to the people who sustain the underground scene: sound technicians, promoters, volunteers and other cultural agents.

Finally, a question we always like to ask: how do you see the current scene in Navarre?

The current Navarrese scene is very healthy, diverse and powerful. In recent years, new bands have emerged that have shaken up the music scene in Euskal Herria and have also had a strong impact nationwide. Navarre is a land of contrasts, both politically and culturally. I think the diversity and uniqueness of this land have always been fertile ground for groundbreaking bands to emerge, from Kojón Prieto y los Huajolotes to Chill Mafia. Let's hope it stays that way. However, not everything is rosy in the old kingdom, as there are fewer and fewer self-managed and neighborhood spaces where you can put on concerts, while more and more private venues and festivals are organized throughout the year. In that sense, we're a bit concerned, because both venues and festivals are dominated by mainstream bands, and it's always the same ones, without giving opportunities to emerging bands like ours.

Marcos Sánchez

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"...we are ugly but we have the music".

ROCK BOTTOM MAGAZINE



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The Old Beast Returns

Issue 50. March 2025