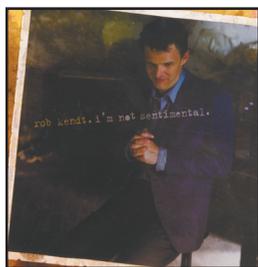


**Rob Kendt**  
*I'm Not Sentimental*  
 robkandt.com



A former theater critic for the New York Times, **Kendt's** music definitely has its dramatic moments. At times this theatrical leaning swings through the realms of the Beatles', Rufus Wainwright's and Elvis Costello's catalogs, and is only enhanced by these musical detours. While vastly eclectic in its range, "**I'm Not Sentimental**" still feels focused, limiting its explorations of parallels and tangents well. The music is further enhanced by the stellar production. Definitely worth looking into. — LGLP

**Jens Lekman**  
*Night Falls Over Kortedala*  
 jenslekman.com



There are a few stumbles here, but few artists can even claim to have stumbled like **Jens Lekman**. Sweden's powerful answer to Morrissey and Magnetic Fields has outdone himself with his newest effort, a feat many worried was not achievable after 2005's "Oh You're So Silent Jens." Where "Maple Leaves" made young girls weak in the knees, the chorus of "Shirin" is so overwhelmingly lavish and exceptionally pulled off that one wonders where Jens Lekman has been all their lives. If your days could use a little brightening up, Jens is here to help. Hear for yourself at the **Black Cat, Oct. 25**. — LGLP

**Orishas**  
*Antidiotico*  
 http://orishasweb.com/



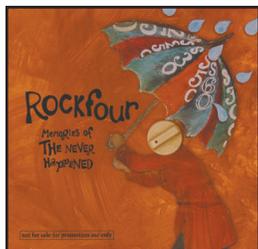
Represent Cuba—it's a simple motto, but one that Cuban expats **Orishas** have fulfilled during their illustrious career. One that has taken them from the birth of hip hop in Cuba — a genre their country refused to acknowledge before 1999, a year before their debut album — to spreading their street gospel of fighting social injustice and world poverty to their new hometowns of Paris, Milan and Madrid; and on radios and in clubs throughout the Spanish-speaking world. They flawlessly mix traditional Cuban rhythms like rumba, sones, guaguancó and boleros, with hip hop beats to create feel-good danceable and head bobbing hits like "Represent Cuba," "Nací Orishas," "5.3.7. Cuba," among other hits. —AF

**The Payola Reserve**  
*200 Years*  
 thepayolareserve.com



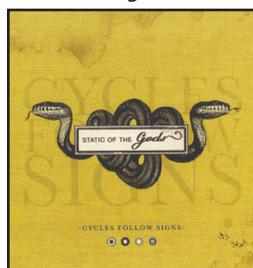
Not even Baltimore has been rendered safe from the sweeping arms of this Tom Waits inspired, Elvis Costello saturated Americana that evokes Neil Young's "Harvest," and the **Payola Reserve** proudly bare their scars on "**200 Years**." While their sound looks back, the thematic elements of the music explore today's current situation: "They say they're getting ready for the rapture, I picture local weather men enraged," Ben Pranger croons on "Around That Long." Overall, "200 Years" deserves some real estate on the shelves where you keep your records — just push one of those Wilco albums over a little more. — LGLP

**Rockfour**  
*Memories of the Never Happened*  
 www.rockfour.com



This is music with a good objective, but not such a good sound. Hailing from Israel, this alternative rock band is definitely influenced by the current chaos in their homeland. Most of their music is slow, sad and haunting, but the lack of tempo and chord changes and the persistent monotone makes the album boring. The songs sound the same and the mixing never changes. It's too bad, because Rockfour just seems to want to bring a little peace to the lives of people who are struggling, but the true struggle may be listening to this album all the way through. "**Memories of the Never Happened**" hits the shelves on **Oct. 9**. — CK

**Static of the Gods**  
*Cycles Follow Signs*  
 staticofthegods.com)



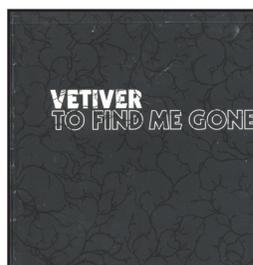
At times reminiscent of the '90s alternative rock that would have found itself on the soundtrack for films like "Empire Records," **Static of the Gods** smartly weave in a few aspects of their Boston brethren Belly and the slightest hint of the sound of the Jesus and Mary Chain. The songwriting is strong which focuses "**Cycles Follow Signs**" tightly, enhancing the listening experience. Nineties music might take a bit of beating in the press these days (but so shall '80s inspired indie rock, and sooner than you know), but Static of the Gods capture everything that was vibrant in that decade past. — LGLP

**Turbonegro**  
*Retox*  
 turbonegro.com



The Norwegian gods of rock'n'roll have once again descended from Scandinavian skies to re-educate us all on what rock really sounds like. The over-production of "Party Animals" is gone, this lower quality approach reminding the listener of decades when rock music was most important. As has become an integral part of **Turbonegro** albums, there are plenty of homages to their heroes: "We're Going To Drop The Atom Bomb" pays its dues to the Dead Kennedys and "Do You Dig Destruction" borrows from the Stooges' "Search and Destroy," among others. A breath of rancid air from the bathroom of the dirtiest metal bar in Oslo... breathe deep. — LGLP

**Vetiver**  
*To Find Me Gone*  
 vetiverse.com



Andy Cacic, **Vetiver's** frontman, along with a whole orchestra of accompaniment, including the talents of Devendra Banhart, has created a lush, nostalgic dreamscape with "**To Find Me Gone**." A distinctly American effort, Vetiver evokes the work of Neil Young and others of his ilk; that layered portrait of the 1970s. While this record ambles at its own pace and to its beat, it never stumbles. Having toured with Bright Eyes and now supporting the Shins, Vetiver's music is highly accessible to fans of both '70s Americana and the more contemporary indie-folk approach. Nearly essential. At **Merriweather Post Pavilion on Oct. 20**, with the Shins. — LGLP

## ALSO AVAILABLE

### Line in the Sand



*A Compilation in Support of Iraq Veterans Against the War*  
 www.wyldstallionsrecords.com

A compilation CD from Wyld Stallions Records, a Vermont-based record label in tuned to social action. This disc is heavy at times, as you'd expect. National acts such as Tom Morello (the Nightwatchman, and of Rage Against The Machine fame) have contributed, as well as area acts as Son of Nun, Head-Roc, Attentat and Ryan Harvey ("Search and Avoid" is a highlight on the disc). Eighty-percent of the profit from this disc will go to Iraq Veterans Against the War, a non-profit. Some good music. Check it out.



### Laura Pursell

*Somewhere in this Room*

www.somewhereinthisroom.com

Competently done adult contemporary. Not our cup of tea, but very pretty, and could be yours.

**Have a CD you think worthy of review? Mail submissions to:**

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 4238 Wilson Blvd. Suite 3078, Arlington, VA 22203