

CD REVIEWS

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These United States

A Picture of the Three of Us At the Gate to the Garden of Eden

www.theseunitedstates.net



Talk about highly-anticipated. We've been waiting ages for this, the debut effort from locals **These United States**. Well, it was worth the wait. Long-time followers will be happy to know that staples like "Jennie Anne," "Sun is Below & Above," "Kings & Aces," and fan favorite "The Business" are all here. Beautifully poetic lyrics compliment dreamy instrumentation, which takes off and flies when the time is right. "Remember Dear" reminds us why we love this band. Check them out **March 3 at IOTA** for their

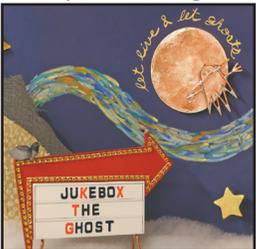
CD release party. Then wish them well as they hit the road, across the country all the way to California. — RF



Jukebox the Ghost

Let Live and Let Ghosts

www.jukeboxtheghost.com



This DC trio has released their first full-length album. Let's get the references to Ben Folds out of the way, because the comparisons with the piano and vocals are obvious and easy. But these guys are their own people, and the sound is retro-refreshing. There's a lot going on here, from the meshing of the instruments to the lyrics. Gotta listen to the opening "Good Day," "Hold It In," "Victoria" and "Where Are All the Scientists Now." Definitely worth checking out. See them for yourself, and pick up a disc, **March 8** at the

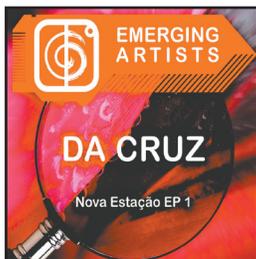


Rock and Roll Hotel. — RF

Da Cruz

Nova Estacao EP 1 & 2

www.dacruzmusic.com



It's been an interesting trip for emerging Bossa Nova / pop artist (Mariana) **Da Cruz**, from her native Sao Paulo, Brazil, where she was struggling to make a name of herself in obscure clubs—to the Irish pubs and danceclubs of Lisbon, Portugal. That's where the Brazilian songstress caught the attention of Swiss producer Ane H., whose infusion of Electro, Latin and Breakbeats, and even Swiss cowbells — make for a refreshing Bossa Nova album on the lines of female stars like Ceu and Bebel Gilberto, and could have nascent Da Cruz becoming a star in the making. Her "intro:

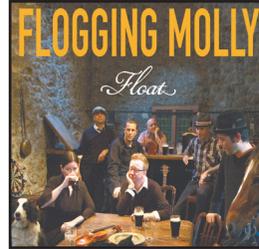
Sao Jorge" captures your attention right away, first lulling you with soft rain-like beats, and then she shouts "Suba!" (Portuguese for "Get up!") with electric guitar rifts and funky percussions immediately following in a very dance-friendly track—much like the title track "Nova Estacao," which features an upbeat techno-driven Brazilian samba beat. "Madrugada" has a more familiar Bossa Nova feel, softer guitar rifts, and soothing vocals; while "Mais Uma Noite" is a great R&B song with a catchy humming chorus, soft percussions, and smooth jazzy horns. — AF



Flogging Molly

Float

www.floggingmolly.com



The good: This album sounds like **Flogging Molly**. The not as good: It sounds like the same ol' Flogging Molly, meaning there isn't a lot new going on. Saving grace is that the Irish punk outfit is a great band, so you know you'll hear something solid on this, the band's fourth full-length effort. You get rollicking songs, plenty of fiddle, most about drinking, politics and relationships. Long-time fans will be happy to see the emergence of "Between a Man and a Woman," an old FM track. The energetic "You Won't Make a Fool Out of Me" will be the next fan favorite sing along. Other highlights are "Requiem For a Dying Song," the title track and the required closing ballad "The Story So Far." The album drops **March 4.** — RF



Haale

No Ceiling

www.haale.com



Here we have a powerful woman that is making sweet music, with her new album. This Iranian-American singer songwriter Haale is a mysterious mix of rock and Persian music that goes into trance and underground poetry. The album "**No Ceiling**," with its 10 songs, will leave no one untouched. With its highlight "Ay Dar Shekastch," it submits a big fat stain, an exotically pineapple one covered with dark, almost black raspy cacao. We are talking about exotic as in an unadulterated sound with lyrics on both English and Persian that is merging into one good package of everything. She is crossing between Amy Lee, a modern Bjork and Jim Morrison. This is impressionable. Hear for yourself at **IOTA Café** on **March 20.** — TKB



Hey Willpower

P.D.A.

www.heywillpower.com



Filled with catchy hooks and electro-pop beats, **Hey Willpower** make a strong stand with their US debut "**P.D.A.**" The album with all of its pop samplings and electronic beats creates an extremely danceable sound echoing Justin Timberlake. If you're looking for lyrics of any substance this isn't your CD. It's built for mindless fun with lyrics like "I'm ok with playing truth or dare/As long as you end up in your underwear," on the opening track. And from there tracks only get more sexually fueled and dance floor evocative. If you wanna party, Willpower will be at **Black Cat** on **March 7.** — AO



Hoots and Hellmouth

Hoots and Hellmouth

www.hootsandhellmouth.com



For those of us who want to take a music journey starting with the Gospel, continuing through '60s rock and the country cotton fields, up to today's experimental highway, give a listen to **Hoots and Hellmouth**. This self titled debut album has a kickass start with its first track "Want on Nothing", followed by 10 other captivating songs with a country/rock sound. This Philadelphia-based band — with Hoots, Grey and mandolin player Berliner — are wild but soulful, sweaty but fresh, wild but calm. They swing from a playful exuberance with the feeling of wanting to stamp your foot into the ground and sing along, to a romantic sound where you let their acoustic guitars, basses, mandolins and grating voices speak for themselves. Check out their website for more information. — TKB



 **SPILT BEER**
 **HALF BEER**
 **FULL BEER**

4 BEERS = EXCELLENT!
3 BEERS = GOOD
2 BEERS = AVERAGE
1 BEER = POOR
SPILT BEER = PARTY FOUL