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**Le Butcherettes - *bi/MENTAL* (Guadalajara, Mexico)**

While previous records from Le Butcherettes were all about raw punk fury and a little art-rock, they've blurred the lines of genre more and more with each release. Here singer Teri Gender Bender and her band craft poignant and immediate tracks that while not always as kinetic and biting as older material, keeps things just as interesting with new waves of textures. You're dropped right into frantic shredding on "spider/WAVES" as an intoxicating vocal hook leaves you shocked before every angular guitar riff. Things are tightened down to an exciting pop point on "give/UP" as the wails of distortion provide a great backdrop for the Bender's yells. "mother/HOLDS" takes a much more fun back and forth with punk godmother Alice Bag" for a listen that is guttural and wrenching. The band even touch on some otherworldly moments within "sand/MAN" as you're pulled a land the album rarely touched on before.

https://open.spotify.com/track/4XVz8cd7kXHQvQXvtn2aw0

**The Peptides - Galápagos, Vol I. (Ottawa)**

Inspired right from the world of Kurt Vonnegut, The Peptides are bring their jazz-pop talents to a strange new concept album. Brilliantly, the whole idea comes off in a cosmic bliss for a listen that works as intriguingly lyric-wise as it does sonically. As we're brought in on aquatic funk of "Invaders" there's a whole sense of history we're seeing in the song and the struggles that face this fictional place. "Sooner Or Later" is all bouncy piano pop and R&B soul, for a track that really soars on its great trumpets and ecstatic vocals. The weight comes down on "Money Is Paper" where equal parts disco and electronics infect the rock for something dangerous and reflective of the track's futuristic overtones. The acoustics to "Savage Love" are some of the crispest on the record (And the Peptides' discography for that matter) and help their unhinged writing really come to life beautifully on this song.

https://open.spotify.com/track/72yi0xpvoOOxzBdySpq6zC

**Jeff Goldblum & The Mildred Snitzer Orchestra *- The Capitol Studio Sesssions* (Pennsylvania)**

While Jazz has slipped into a kind of niche territory for modern listeners, those having a lot more fun with it can make it feel really accessible and exciting. For an album ripe with as much good humour as it has great playing, this album from Jeff Goldblum delivers the goods. While the playing stands out quickly, there's a great sense of production as you listen to "Cantaloupe Island," and hear Goldblum play and joke with the audience in equal parts. You can hear Goldblum laughing through his playing on the joyous performance of "My Baby Just Cares For Me" as him and Haley Reinhart move through the tract with an infectious joy. Ultimately it's many of the collaborations like Imelda May on "Straighten Up And Fly Right" that show not only the great personality Goldblum brings to Jazz but how well his playing can serve as the ballast that keeps it all from feeling lop-sided. Unless you heard her number in the new "Wreck It Ralph" film, you may be surprised to hear Sarah Silverman killing it on this record too, as she brings out the most from Goldblum while injecting her own great humour along with glossy vocals.

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**Before The Coyotes Come** **-  *Vanessa Luarin* (Ottawa)**

In the dense production brought to Laurin's playing, a simple mix of pianos and strings feel like an oppressive and emotive force on "Before The Coyotes Come." As you're just getting into the brutal detail and colour of the lyricism, "Aquamarine" opens things up to a more narrative-driven writing and sees the low-end of the strings coming out on their own. "You Wanted In" is much more meta in its musical approach to describing relationships as Laurin lifts and drops her instrumentation in with a true sense of dynamic fury. Laurin breaks out all her most visceral vocal chops on "The Longest Way Down" where she lets her troubles out and creates an unnerving sense of harmony to make you question how much supporting others can destroy ourselves.

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**My Brightest Diamond - *A Million And One* (Detroit)**

There's such a playfulness to the music that My Brightest Diamond (Shara Nova) makes. Through this new record, Nova starts dialing her lush and outlandish textures towards pop and creates something equally bouncy and unusual. You can feel a total sense of place within the tones of "It's Me On The Dance Floor" but it's the driving backbone of the rhythms that really set it ablaze. Alternatively something like "Rising Star" subdues much of its alternative beats and creates a startling sense of harmony out of all the instruments rather than finding unique footing on every front. Appropriately "Sway" itself brings a kinetic energy to its playing and makes each note really hit hard for a song that is angular but fun. Along with some more fiery moments on tracks like "White Noise" there's something to keep you constantly moving while eager to slip on the headphones to grab every detail of this record.

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