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Head to your local shop for Record Store Day

New in the racks: Popa Chubby, T-Model Ford, Moreland and Arbuckle, Catherine Russell

By Mike Cote



Saturday is Record Store Day, a national event celebrating the spirit of independence for your neighborhood record store – if you still got one.

The event traditionally includes special releases exclusive to independent stores. Timed to coincide with the event comes “I Need That Record: The Death (Or Possible Survival) Of The Independent Record Store.” Filmmaker Brendan Toller’s documentary examines why more than 3,000 independent record stores have closed in the U.S. during the last decade. (Rest in peace Bart’s CD Cellar, a Boulder store among the latest to close.)

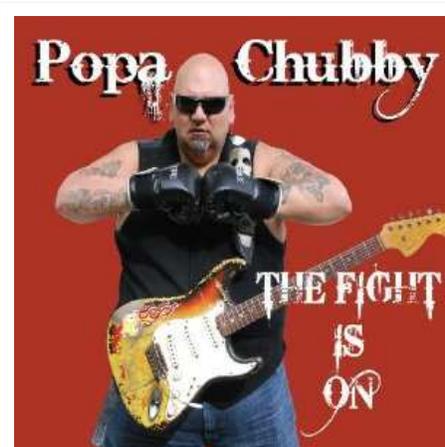
“Greedy record labels, media consolidation, homogenized radio, big box stores, Ecommerce, shoddy ‘stars’ pushed by big money, and the digital revolution all pose threats on the very well being of our favorite record stores and the music industry at large,” the press release for the film says. “Will these stores die? Will they survive?”

MVD Visual is releasing the DVD of the film, which has already made the festival circuit, to independent stores exclusively until July 27, after which it will be available elsewhere. The announcement came too late to secure a review copy, but you can check out the [trailer](#) and a [news segment](#) about the film.

While you’re visiting your neighborhood record store, here are a few new releases you might consider:

POPA CHUBBY *The Fight is On* (Blind Pig)

One my favorite mountain town surprises came a few years ago when Popa Chubby just happened to be booked to play a free outdoor show in Beaver Creek, where I was staying with friends for the weekend. The hard-working powerhouse guitarist – he seems to put a new record out nearly every year – delivers the goods with the aptly named *The Fight is On*. Don’t be put off by his rather cartoony-sounding moniker (yes, he is a big guy).



Popa Chubby, aka Ted Horowitz, is dead-serious about his Hendrix-inspired guitar playing and tough-talking songs, especially on the autobiographical tale of his life in the blues and rock, “Another Ten Years Gone.” Sure, “We Got Some Rocking to Do” sounds like a Spinal Tap song, but therein lies its charm.

And you can’t go wrong with a slide-guitar workout called “Switchblade Combs and Candy Cigarettes.” “I’m a noise-making love machine,” Chubby sings. Dude, we believe you.

T-MODEL FORD *The Ladies Man* (Alive Natural Sound)

The blues doesn’t get much rawer than this. T-Model Ford — 88 at the time of this unvarnished recording from July 2008 — plays a rough-edged brand of blues that is



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more about feel and tone than technique, and fueled by a healthy dose of Jack Daniels.

This acoustic set of traditional country blues like “Chicken Head Man,” “Two Trains” and “Hip Shaking Woman” includes the guitarist and singer backed by several musicians, including Dustin Arbutckle on harmonica and Aaron Moreland on guitar (See the review of the duo’s latest disc below.) You also get boozy spoken-word interludes from Ford, including “I’m coming to kick your asses.”



MORELAND AND ARBUCKLE *Flood* (Telarc)

Guitarist Aaron Moreland and singer/harmonica player Dustin Arbutckle are making the blues cool for the next generation. While Moreland and Arbutckle pay their respects to the tradition – covers include a high-energy versions of Little Walter’s “Hate to See You Go” and the traditional “Legend of John Henry” – they focus on original material like the swampy “Before the Flood,” a moody instrumental that segues into “18 Counties,” a rock-fueled boogie blues that revisits an age-old theme. They’re equally adept at acoustic material, such as the brooding “Your Man Won’t Ever Know” and the country-laced “Can’t Leave Well Enough Alone.”



CATHERINE RUSSELL *Inside This Heart of Mine* (World Village)

On her third album for World Village, singer Catherine Russell continues to explore and expand on pop, jazz and blues stylings in the tradition of icons like Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald. Her diverse set includes tunes by Fats Waller (“Inside This Heart of Mine”), Duke Ellington (“Long, Strong and Consecutive”), Wynonie Harris (“Quiet Whisky”) and Willie Dixon (“Spoonful”). Supported by a band that includes several horn players – including tuba — Russell swings, swoons and purrs throughout this heartfelt set of timeless tunes.



Mike Cote is the editor of ColoradoBiz. Read his blog, “Poppin’ Circumstance,” or e-mail him at mcote@cobizmag.com.

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Mike, this is a great article that I have shared on FB and Twitter. There is nothing like a local record store. I hope others see the value and go buy some tunes.

By Rosanne Gain, Gain-Stovall, Inc. on 2010 04 16

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