

## case closed

Say this about **Neko Case**: The countryish pop singer with the voice we all wish we had isn't predictable. Having just signed to Epitaph imprint Anti, you'd expect she'd want to debut with a watershed work as a follow-up to her universally acclaimed 2002 Bloodshot album, *Blacklisted*. So what does she do instead? Debuting November 9, she bows with the live CD, *The Tigers Have Spoken*.

But this isn't the usual stopgap measures we've come to expect from concert albums by emerging artists. One glance at the track listing of this 11-song, 35-minute collection, mostly recorded at a few 2004 shows in Chicago and Toronto, might give fans a double take. Five tracks are little-known covers, specifically the **Shangri-Las'** "The Train from Kansas City," **Buffy Sainte-Marie's** obsessive "Soulful Shade of Blue," **Loretta Lynn's** double-standards decrying "Rated X," **Freakwater's Catherine Irwin's** "Hex" and **Cataldo's** "Loretta." The album also includes a handful of Case's own songs; one is the first song she ever composed to completion, "Favorite" (previously only available from her tour-merch table), and two others. "If You Knew" and the title track are brand new.

**ICE** couldn't help but inquire of Ms. Case what her mindset was in conceiving and creating such an unusual release. "I approached it not knowing what I was doing at all," she laughs. "My mindset was panicked and crazy. Excitement! Terror!" Well, then, how about her thinking in picking out such unique covers for her distinctive touch? This too, was apparently not the result of a master plan. "I always have a long list of covers that I want to try, and I just picked out the ones that I thought would work with [live backing band] **The Sadies**. They also had a say in what we played."

Although Case is already back in the studio recording a new album (with the assistance of **Garth Hudson** from **The Band**), *The Tigers* is an unusual and fresh album from someone breaking free of convention, with help not only from the aforementioned Sadies – who make respectable country records of their own – but also from well-traveled pedal-steel player **Jon Rauhouse**, the **Pinetops' Jennie** and **Jim**, singer **Kelly Hogan** and Case's **Corn Sisters** partner, **Carolyn Mark**. For this she is entirely grateful. "Obviously, they're all really great musicians," she says. "I try to surround myself with people I love and feel comfortable with. Also, they need to be extremely funny, which luckily every last one of them is. And they can all play about 10, if not 20 or 30, times better than me!"

Obviously, she's modest, too. Take it from the tiger's mouth.

## news and notes

On November 16, former no-wave New York staple **Lydia Lunch** (ex-**Teenage Jesus & The Jerks** and **Eight Eyed Spy**) is back with her first full album in five years with *Smoke in the Shadows* on Atavistic. For this follow-up to 1999's *Matrikamantra*, Ms. Lunch worked in Los Angeles with underground guitarist **Nels Cline**, plus Len Del Rio and Tommy Grenas helping out with the production. She's also aided and abetted by the **Contortions' Adele Bertei**, **Legendary Pink Dots' Niels Van Hoorn** and **Geraldine Fibbers' Carla Bozulich**. ■ Sad that **Stiv Bators** died in 1990 before you could catch one of the myriad **Dead Boys** reunions? Well, the next best thing is to watch live footage of one of their vintage shows, which you will be able to do November 16 when Music Video Distributors releases the DVD *Live at CBGB's 1977*. Not only do you get this down and dirty punk group in their *Young, Loud and Snotty* prime from recently unearthed footage by notorious filmmaker (and **Plasmatics** svengali) Rod Swenson, but there are the usual bonuses, including tasty 1977 band interviews and promo clips, as well as new interviews with guitarist **Cheetah**



■ neko case

**Chrome** and then manager and CBGB maven Hilly Kristal ■ Of more recent posthumous live footage, no sooner did the final **Elliott Smith** album, *From a Basement on the Hill*, appear in October, but live concert footage is now being released on DVD. November 30 will see *Elliott Smith - Olympia, Washington* (MVD), a 13-song solo acoustic document of his indie days from the last evening of 1999's Yoyo A Go Go festival ■ Attention rockabilly fans: November 9 is a day worth circling on your calendar, as it means the appearance of *Hound Dog/Be Bop a Lula*, a 1956 live recording from *The Alan Freed Show* of the immortal **Gene Vincent & His Blue Caps**. Expect it via Norton, who already offer CD reissues of this classic outfit's six original Capitol LPs in their catalog ■ **The Flatmates** are the subject of a strong 19-song retrospective, *Love and Death (The Flatmates 86-89)* on November 9 (Clairerecords). One of the many peppy, jangly and melodic English bands of the C86 period, this CD unearths aborted material intended for an album on London Records ■ They've been reissued on CD before, but Jetset's new versions of **The Go-Betweens'** late '80s poetic-pop masterworks, *Liberty Belle and Black Diamond Express*, *Tallulah* and

*16 Lovers Lane* contains something the last round didn't and should've: bonus items. A bonanza of them, in fact. All three will include a bonus CD of rare and unreleased material, radio sessions, alternate takes, two covers ("You're a Big Girl Now" and "I'm Gonna Knock on Your Door") and seven videos, straight from the vaults of singer/songwriters **Robert Forster** and **Grant McLennan**. Add in a 28-page booklet and thorough remastering and you've struck gold on November 9 ■ The new **Innocence Mission** album, *Now the Day Is Over*, is entirely > page 29

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