

to hone a style of sorts, but it's an OK start. (thebridesmaidsmusic.com)

tim buckley

**MY FLEETING HOUSE (DVD)**  
(MUSIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS)

This is pretty fabulous. The senior Buckley (father of **JEFF**, who he only met once), died from a drugs and alcohol overdose 32 years ago, June 29, 1975, aged 28 (damnit). So we were robbed of his illustrious live performances thereafter. He was known as an Irish-American folk singer in a trance, his eyes mostly closed, his deeply expressive, haunting voice coming deep from within his subconsciousness as if unregulated, flying loose and free in the breeze. *My Fleeting House* collects 14 TV appearances, connected by illuminating commentary from original lyrical collaborator **LARRY BECKETT**, his guitarist **LEE UNDERWOOD**, and his (and his son's) biographer **DAVID BROWNE**. Along the way he's introduced on **THE MONKEES'** 1967 show by **MICKEY DOLENZ**, is lauded by **LEONARD BERNSTEIN**, chats with an admiring **STEVE ALLEN**, and debates religious myopia with **JOSEPH HELLER**. But it's his unusual performances, that smoky look and cloudy singing, underneath a kudzu-curlly head of springy hair that fans the fascination with this DVD. Whether it's his early 1967-1969 12-string folk (my favorite), his transition to unrestricted free-form jazz pop, even these experts cannot explain that supernatural voice. His loss was a tragedy, as this DVD reveals to all born too late. (mvdb2b.com)

bye bye blackbirds

**HONEYMOON MINI-LP**  
(BYE BYE BLACKBIRDS)

(by **ADAM SYMONS**) Oakland CA's BBBs are unabashed pop addicts. This is clear from the get-go on their debut, eight-song mini LP. The opening "In Every Season" kicks things off with a chugging British Invasion-style major chord before slathering on the vocal harmonies and chimey guitar. "After Work" starts off like Herman's Hermits, but before you can peg these dudes as '60s fetishizers, it quickly moves into Go-Betweens territory. In fact, for every loving, blatant '60s pop reference (like the "Stepping Stone" choruses of "Needle in the Haystack Girl") there's a counterpoint from another era (such as **IAN ROBERTSON**'s Richard Thompson-cum-Tom Verlaine via Robyn Hitchcock Tele licks). This disc makes stops all over the place: New Zealand, Manchester, Liverpool, Laurel Canyon... but chief songwriters **BRADLEY SKAUGHT** and **WILLIAM DUKE** are true pop travel guides; and not one missed connection or dead end the whole trip. Make your reservations today! (byebyeblackbirds.com)

johnny cash

**AT SAN QUENTIN (BOX SET)**  
(COLUMBIA/LEGACY/SONY BMG)

There've been many posthumous Cash cash-in releases, but this one is the deal. What was once a great, 10-song, #1 album

in 1969 is here presented as a compelling, three-disc box set. The third disc, a DVD of the original 60-minute British documentary by Granada TV, is less interesting to those who've already viewed it (last year it aired on Ovation). But the extra 21 songs on the first two discs, encompassing the entire original February 24 concert's nearly three hours, make this an important release that should have surfaced long ago. Few live albums are more famous than the two Cash made in Northern California, in '68 at Folsom Prison and then this. And the San Quentin one was particularly hardcore, given the heightened tension caused by playing for the most violent and dangerous maximum-security prisoners. And though the LP hit the mainstream behind the #2 smash novelty song "A Boy Named Sue," it was actually more typified by the defiant and angry song that was debuted that day among several tales of suffering, lawlessness, and tragic living, "San Quentin." That the uneasy atmosphere was defused by a man with real empathy remains the signature of this most remarkable document that now features 22 Cash songs (12 "new"), plus nine more by the singers who were part of his extended family show—his new bride, **JUNE CARTER CASH**, the timeless **CARTER FAMILY**, the ever-great **CARL PERKINS**, and **THE STATLER BROTHERS**, all of whom match Cash for grace and mood. The booklet is of the first rank as well, a throwback.

the caulfield sisters and julie peel

**DIVINE CANDY SPLIT 7"**  
(AMERICAN LAUNDROMAT)

john p. strohm and dylan in the movies

**SO LONG CITY SKIES SPLIT 7"**  
(AMERICAN LAUNDROMAT)

Here's two fun split 7" platters. The first is two covers, though not, as is common, of each other. Brooklyn's Caulfield Sisters convert **JESUS & MARY CHAIN**'s "Some Candy Talking" into a live, unplugged light-pop drone recorded here by Seattle's WEXP; not bad! Whereas ex-**PETROL** French singer Peel is more reverent with **THE BREEDERS'** "Divine Hammer," with up-tempo buzzing guitars, beating drums, and a replication of the key harmony. It's as full of infectious energy as **KIM DEAL**.

The other split is two originals. **BLAKE BABIES** and **ANTENNA** guitar guy Strohm, helped by New York vets from **THE SILOS**, is Wild Turkey-soaked in beguiling Americana on "The Long So Long," like Big Star gone Alt. Country. Even better is the streamlined, slow power-pop groove of Boston's **DITM**, i.e. **BRIAN SULLIVAN** with friends, more like a lighter Sloan or *Mania* Lucy Show than the **BELLE & SEBASTIAN** tune he took for a name. Ah, 7"ers, how I missed ye! Leave 'em wanting more. (alr-music.com)

celestial

**CELESTIAL**  
(SKIPPING STONES)

Some reviews write themselves. This

Orebro, Sweden group, a vehicle for one **ANDREAS HAGMAN** with several friends, have the right name. He writes and records pleasant, celestial sounding jangle-guitar beauties with lots of creamy piano, and lightly hummed vocals, forging a melodious middle ground between the New Zealand moody-pop bands of Flying Nun, the twee pop groups of England's Sarah Records, and the less precious guitar-popsters of *C86* (and on one song, "Pale Blue Eyes" the sighing Americana of Mojave 3.) Everything is dainty and divine but never persnickety or flimsy, as Hagman's and **MALIN DAHLBERG**'s comely crooning combines like aural chamomile tea—while the music is the Splenda. All the world is right in these Celestial heavens; gaze at the twinkling stars. (skippingstonesrecords.com)

chelsea

**FASTER, CHEAPER & BETTER LOOKING**  
(TKO)

Two years after its import release, the U.S. finally gets this surprisingly hard-hitting Chelsea album. Though leader **GENE OCTOBER**'s sporadic Chelsea discs over the last 30 years have never been bad, the key this time is the reformation of three-fifths of the London band's classic 1977-1980 lineup, with crucial guitarist **JAMES STEVENSON** returning to the fold along with slammin' drummer **CHRIS BASHFORD**. (Rhythm guitarist **DAVE MARTIN**, sadly, has multiple sclerosis and doesn't appear, and bassist **GEOFF MILES**, who lives in San Francisco, is replaced by the hot **TONY BARBER** from **BUZZCOCKS**!) *Faster* is, interestingly, just as cantankerous as the sole self-titled, import LP debut released by October, Stevenson, and Bashford in 1979. Can only original punk rockers still perfect the form, even if they're pushing or past 50? Yes, apparently, since this is just the latest example of advancing age having just *toughened* the hides of the founders and elicited records that stack up nicely against the distant past. October hasn't sounded this good since his days of sputtering out rough 'n' tumble classics like "Right to Work" b/w "The Loner" or this lineup's later staples, "Urban Kids" and "No Escape." He's reinvigorated by Stevenson's crunchy, fluid, heavy presence (yowza!) and the tighter, zippier rhythm section. The songs and riffs are severe, and the social consciousness of the opening smackers "Living in the Urban U.K." and especially "Sod the War" brings punk back to what it once did best: agitate your brain. There's a cool, blues-punk **IGGY POP** cover ("Home Boy"), too. (tkorecords.com)

courtney collins

**VIOLET NIGHT**  
(MAYPOLE)

My ever-roving eye alighted here because Madison, WI's sultry chanteuse Collins covers **IDLEWILD**'s *100 Broken Windows* hotfoot "Roseability." Credit: Does anyone else cover Idlewild?! More credit: Collins has no intention of xeroxing songs she digs.