



THE AUSTIN CHRONICLE

ACL PREVIEW



FIRST WEEKEND 2017

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ON THE COVER: XX, Jay-Z, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Killers by Gary Miller; Silent Disco by David Brendan Hall; Gorillaz by Shelley Hiam



Jonny P 11:45AM, BMI STAGE

Jonny P hopes to transport you to New York.

“I want my record to sound like how I remember summer in the Bronx, sitting on a stoop at 7 o’clock watching cars go by and talking to your friends, greeting neighbors,” introspects Powell. “Those were the best years of my life and if I could bring someone there that would mean the world to me.”

A modern soulman soundtracking the duality of the familiar and unfamiliar, the singer plies smooth, milky vocals atop simple instrumentation in a genre generally characterized by hefty rhythms and horns. Bronx-born and based in Nashville, he’s heading to L.A. to record. Although in the initial stages career-wise, he’s already set a precedent.

SEEING AS HE’S HEADING INTO THE STUDIO BEHIND ALI SHAHEED MUHAMMAD FROM A TRIBE CALLED QUEST AND RAPHAEL SAADIQ, HIS STORYTELLING LOOKS TO FUSE WITH SONIC TECHNICALITIES.

“I expect this record to hit hard,” he predicts. “It’ll have the sultry, soft vocals of soul music and the songwriting will be as catchy as any of the Top 40 pop songs, while still being true to myself.”

Seeing as he’s heading into the studio behind Ali Shaheed Muhammad from A Tribe Called Quest and Raphael Saadiq, his storytelling looks to fuse with sonic technicalities.

“When I was younger, I learned where to put [audio] tricks, but mainly how to use your voice to move people and tell a story,” he says. “At the end of the day I have to perform these, so if I’m not writing things that are real there’s no way I’m going to be able to channel the energy and feelings of what the song is about.”

His latest EP *Good to You* is out now, with a full-length following soon.

“I’m excited to have a few weeks to dive in and really make a set that is just for Austin, something special. I want everyone to walk away and feel like that was in the moment.”

– Isabella Castro-Cota

Methyl Ethel

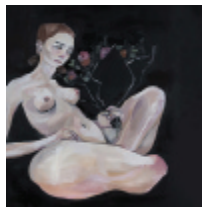
Everything Is Forgotten (4AD)

Methyl Ethel’s sophomore LP begins promisingly enough. A stomp beat and grooving bass to “Drink Wine” swaggers ahead of a backdrop of synths. That bleeds into “Ubu,” the Perth trio entwining a danceable beat, obsessive paranoia, and a catchy refrain: “Why’d you have to go and cut your hair?” Then things go south. “Act of Contrition” and “Groundswell,” whose slogging beat and island vibe sound wildly out of place, are clunkers, while the repetitive “Summer Moon” tanks. Stick with the single, “Ubu.”

(12:30pm, American Express stage; weekend one only)

★★

– Libby Webster



Bandcamp releases, takes on a full jangle. Then, fiddle nestles “Bobby,” a duet of love and desperation alongside fellow home townie Emily Yacina. Four consecutive tracks, “Witch” through “Sportstar,” are fan-unfamiliar in electro-aggression, but they fit past albums’ discomfiting Auto-Tune moments. Something ghostly lives in Giannascoli’s songs, both rootsy and inorganic, and here launching to the forefront. **(1:15pm, Barton Springs stage)**

★★★★

– Rachel Rascoe

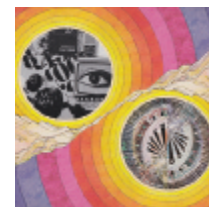
Mutemath

Play Dead (Wojtek)

Mutemath’s middling fifth LP and five-year endeavor, *Play Dead* takes foreshadowing cues from 2015’s *Vitals* and last year’s *Changes*, then arcs upward into the electronic cloud. Upon those visions, the New Orleans band has taken on a much less democratic sound, as frontman Paul Meany rises front and center. “Stroll On” ambles a lush, bouncy pop vibe, and the Eighties-electro-tinged “Break the Fever” pushes into hit-chasing Maroon 5 territory. Now that electrifying drummer Darren King, a founding member alongside Meany, recently walked – as did longtime bassist Roy Mitchell-Cárdenas – Mutemath faces an uphill battle. **(2:15pm, Honda stage)**

★★

– Kahron Spearman



(Sandy) Alex G

Rocket (Domino)

Introducing a new chapter for Alex Giannascoli, *Rocket* is nuanced and shifting. On his second major release, the Philly multi-instrumentalist sandwiches trademark catchy gloom around warped experimentalism. Off-kilter, intimate sound, propelled by numerous bedroom



WELLES

11:45am, HomeAway stage

The first signing to C3 Presents’ eponymous label, Jehsea Wells drives the middle lane of the classic/alternative rock highway on EP *Codeine*. The Arkansas native plies a gravitas *welles* beyond his 22 years. Youthful introspection meets anthemic hooks in “Life Like Mine” and “Are You Feeling Like Me.”

– Michael Toland

THE WILD NOW

11:45am, Miller Lite stage

Austin’s entry in the boy/girl indie sweepstakes, the Wild Now alternate betwixt light acid-pop and spacey disco on second EP *Afterglow*. Drew Walker’s bright guitars, creamy synths, and shifting grooves frame Taylor Baker’s sultry vocals. The duo won magazine *American Songwriter*’s performer award in 2014. (weekend one only)

– Michael Toland

VALERIE JUNE

2:30pm, Tito’s stage

Banjo, guitar, ukulele – Valerie June plucks anything with strings, or *straaangs*, as she might say in her taffy-thick Tennessee drawl. That accent causes cognitive dissonance when paired with her crown of dreadlocks, but June gleefully marries disparate ideas. Sophomore LP *The Order of Time* is deeply grounded in American roots music – Appalachian, blues, bluegrass, country, gospel – while waxing metaphysical and dancing on the “Astral Plane.”

– Thomas Fawcett

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Hamilton Leithauser

3:15PM, BARTON SPRINGS STAGE

"The Walkmen was really its own entity that we were so deeply embedded in, so once you're out of that, everything's completely different in terms of day-to-day life and the way songs develop," admits Hamilton Leithauser, who fronted the influential New York band that helped define the indie sound of the new century. "I'm very happy with how it's gone, but at first there's just a lot of unanticipated stuff. I could do whatever I wanted and work with whomever I wanted, but the thing that's a bummer is you just don't have all your best friends there with you, in the good times and bad times."

Since the Walkmen's 2014 split, Leithauser has explored new terrain in the smooth croon of his solo debut, *Black Hours*, and last year's acclaimed collaboration with Vampire Weekend's Rostam Batmanglij, *I Had a Dream That You Were Mine*. The latter's chiming melodies recalled Leithauser's former outfit behind

his raw howl and humming tenor, all of it amped with the sonic adventurousness of Batmanglij's eclectic production and multi-instrumentalism.

Already at work on new material, Leithauser has tapped an Austin contingent as his current backing band, including

former Spoon guitarist Eric Harvey, and Matt Oliver from Sound Team and Big Orange Recording.

"I'm always switching the band up, and the new guys feel like different phases to me," he offers. "At first it's weird, because you don't have the old reliables to fall back on. Rostam described me as

uncomfortable in my own skin one time, and I thought that was funny, but he meant that as a compliment. When you're writing music, you're trying to do something that's different and new, but in order to do that you really need to break out of what is comfortable. You have to get to this weirdly uncomfortable spot." — Doug Freeman

SINCE THE WALKMEN'S 2014 SPLIT, LEITHAUSER HAS EXPLORED NEW TERRAIN IN HIS SMOOTH CROON.

CRYSTAL CASTLES

4:15pm, Honda stage

Nearly a decade after this Toronto duo released its eponymous debut and five years after playing ACL Fest, Crystal Castles returns with skull-crushing electronica — and a new lineup. Following the departure of founding vocalist Alice Glass in 2014, founder-producer Ethan Kath brought in singer Edith Frances. Oscillating between an ethereal, pretty sound and unhinged hollering, her vocals claw their way over feverish beats. — Libby Webster

LA FEMME

5:15pm, BMI stage

Mystère, the latest LP from French collective La Femme, features the backside of a woman as her hair weaves itself into a vagina. As alluring sonically as it is physically, the album is an experience rather than a pastime. Spurts of surf and psych, EDM splashes, ethereal hymnal chords, and French pop commingle via the Krautrock-inspired quintet. (weekend one only) — Isabella Castro-Cota

SKEPTA

5:15pm, HomeAway stage

While grime defined his hot-take singles and underground radio broadcasts, genre pioneer Skepta (né Joseph Adenuga) ultimately spearheaded a cross-continental affair. Debut *Greatest Hits* (2007) to *Konnichiwa* (2016), Skepta remains the antihero, flipping off authority with his London snarl and volatile tone. With an unmatched bravado, he rattles over a mélange of jungle, UK garage, and dancehall. — Alejandra Ramirez

SOLANGE

7:15pm, Barton Springs stage

Soul singer extraordinaire, label owner, and influencer, Solange Knowles no longer stands in the shadow of her sister. Leading that charge is the New Orleans-based singer's critically acclaimed 2016 full-length *A Seat at the Table*. The album's lead single, "Cranes in the Sky," topped the *Billboard* hip-hop/R&B charts and earned Knowles her first Grammy.

— Kahron Spearman

James Vincent McMorrow

True Care (James Mahogany Books)

James Vincent McMorrow has come a long way from the lonesome, acoustic ruminations on his 2010 debut *Early in the Morning*. Following in the same vein of *Post Tropical* (2013) and *We Move* (2016), *True Care* showcases the Dubliner's ethereal, soaring falsetto liberated from stodgy folk structures. Instead, his voice spaces out in an R&B context that swims through brooding synths ("Change of Heart," "Don't Wait Forever"), languid keystrokes ("Constellations," "Pink Salt Lake"), and skittering electronics ("Bears," "Thank You"). (3:15pm, HomeAway stage)

★★★★



— Alejandra Ramirez

The Lemon Twigs

Do Hollywood (4AD)

How many years does it take for something old to seem new again? For Long Island brothers Michael and Brian D'Addario, it's about two or three decades. Fueled by forefathers Queen and Todd Rundgren, the duo pulls off references few are attempting presently, and does it extremely well. Prodigious musicianship and production help from Foxygen's Jonathan Rado forged the wunderkinds' (now 18 and 20) debut release. The bell-bottomed Beatles devotees wax tales of young love in grandiose style on "I Wanna Prove to You" and "As Long as We're Together," trailing back-and-forth vocal harmonies behind zany instrumentals. *Do Hollywood* offers a lesson in embracing both the origins and originality of modern rock & roll. (3:15pm, Miller Lite stage)

★★★★



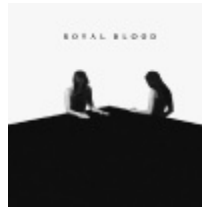
— Rachel Rascoe

Royal Blood

How Did We Get So Dark? (Warner Bros.)

Brighton's Royal Blood could splatter another pair of youngsters with big amps and a collection of Black Keys/White Stripes albums. By subbing bass for guitar, however, the UK duo gives its grungy riffola a bottom to rival a hippo's ass, then demonstrates far less reverence for blues rawk ancestors than their American brethren. Bassist Mike Kerr's English keen rings less Robert Plant than Matthew Bellamy, the better to soar melodies. "I Only Lie When I Love You" and the title track won't drag big rock forward, but *How Did We Get So Dark?* will definitely scratch a riff-loving itch. (5:15pm, Barton Springs stage; weekend one only)

★★★



— Michael Toland

Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real

(Fantasy Records)

Promise of the Real proved just that on Lukas Nelson's previous three LPs. Number four delivers. Where previously Americana-tinged alt-rock teetered precariously on the bandleader's reedy whine, here that country DNA seals a seamless blend of Farm Aid authenticity. A Crazy Horse ferment leftover from apprenticeship with Neil Young (opener "Set Me Down on a Cloud"), Texan twang ("Fool Me Once"), beatific Fred Neil/Harry Nilsson lilt ("Just Outside of Austin"), and Gulf Coast soul ("Carolina") all red carpet the genuine Southern literature of acoustic bootlegger "Runnin' Shine." The ladies of Lucius, kinfolk Willie and Bobbie Nelson, and even Lady Gaga get in on *The Real*, all songs by Lukas — Red Headed Austinite. (5:15pm, Miller Lite stage)

★★★★



— Raoul Hernandez

Bonobo

Migration (Ninja Tune)

Arguably the most accessible album of his 16-year career, *Migration* finds British ambient electronic maven Bonobo (Simon Green) sounding completely at home on his sixth studio release. Ironically, the highly emotive disc arrives after extensive travels during his successful *North Borders* world tour, though the aftermath of a family loss carries equal weight in that relatives from all over descended back on Brighton. Green thus resurrects personal ideas of identity and its meaningfulness. The Nick Murphy-assisted "No Reason" is a dark stalker juxtaposed against the bright "Break Apart," which features Rhye's lithe vocals.

(6:15pm, Tito's stage)

★★★★



— Kahron Spearman

Ryan Adams

Prisoner (Blue Note)

Aside from "knocked-it-out-of-the-park" albums including 2000 solo debut *Heartbreaker* and 2005's *Cold Roses*, Ryan Adams' discography is made up of solid, Americana-tinged crooning. *Prisoner*, his 16th release and most obvious homage to Springsteen's early-Eighties output, doesn't stray, though it does find Adams at his most heavy-handed lyrically. Within the first verse of the lamenting, slow-burn "Breakdown," he somehow crams in "thorn in my side/ pain I can't hide" and "a soul black as coal." Still, opener "Do You Still Love Me?" delivers a true earworm, and "Broken Anyway" sends heartland rock guitar riffs spiraling over a glamorous, glimmering pop ballad. (7:15pm, Miller Lite stage)

★★★



— Libby Webster

FRIDAY FACE-OFF

BY KAHRON SPEARMAN



The xx

8:15PM, HONDA STAGE

Government name(s):

Romy Madley Croft, Oliver Sim, Jamie Smith

Hometown: London

Active since: 2005

Genre: electro-pop

Number of albums: 3

Musical influences:

Aaliyah, Cocteau Twins, downtempo

Breakout moment: "Crystalised" video

Notable collaborators:

Diplo, Kelela, Robyn, Cat Power

Songs they should play:

"Crystalised," "Angels," "On Hold"

Song they shouldn't play: "Our Song"

Stereotypical fan:

#allblackeverything, especially outlook

Best lines: "Things have gotten closer to the sun/ And I've done things in small doses/ So don't think that I'm pushing you away/ When you're the one that I've kept closest" ("Crystalised")

Notable beefs: Baria Qureshi,

kicked out of the band upon the release of their critically acclaimed debut

Last local show: ACL Live at the

Moody Theater, May 10-11, 2017

Factoid: members all attended Elliott School, which produced the band Hot Chip, electronic acts Burial and Four Tet, and actor Pierce Brosnan



PHOTOS BY GARY MILLER

Jay-Z

8:15PM, AMERICAN EXPRESS STAGE

Government name: Shawn Corey Carter

Hometown: Brooklyn

Active since: 1986

Genre: greatest MC ever

Number of albums: 13

Musical influences: Big Daddy Kane, Nas

Notable collaborators: Biggie, Rihanna, Alicia Keys, Kanye West, Pharrell

Breakout moment: "Hard Knock Life (Ghetto Anthem)"

Song he should play: "The Story of O.J.,"

"Big Pimpin'," "Takeover," "Dead Presidents II,"

"Where I'm From"

Song he shouldn't play: most of the basura he recorded on *Kingdom Come*

Stereotypical fan: only listens to East Coast rap, wears fresh all-white Air Force Ones, says "deadass"

Best lines: "That's what I'ma do, take you back to the dude/ With the Lexus, fast-forward the jewels and the necklace/ Let me tell you dudes what I do to protect this/ I shoot at you actors like movie directors" ("Public Service Announcement")

Notable beefs: Nas, Kanye West, Beyoncé, Solange

Last local show: Austin Music Hall, SXSW 2014, with Kanye West

Factoid: \$810 million net worth and apparently didn't graduate high school

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FRIDAY LOCALS BY KEVIN CURTIN

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL (12:30pm, Honda stage, weekend one only) Forty-seven-year-running Western swing posse led by charismatic giant Ray Benson.

CARSON MCHONE (12:30pm, Tito's stage, weekend one only) Emotionally stirring young country native with unique songwriting gifts.

BARTON HILLS CHOIR (12:30pm, Austin Kiddie Limits stage) Kids sing the darnedest things ... like the Grateful Dead and Muse.

MISSIO (1:15pm, HomeAway stage) RCA-signed electro-pop duo whose synth 'n' beats sound has already yielded a minor hit in "Middle Fingers."

BAND OF HEATHENS (1:30pm, Tito's stage) Smooth, electric Americana vets with oft-romantic songcraft.

SCHOOL OF ROCK (2:30pm/Sun., 12:30pm, Austin Kiddie Limits stage) Witness the earliest performance of future Austin rock stars.

Ought

11:30AM,
HOMEAWAY STAGE

Despite a break in content-cranking since 2015, Montreal post-punk quartet Ought has been busy.

"We had toured so much in the last three years that we wanted to spend a longer amount of time writing new music," emails bassist Ben Stidworthy. "We wrote a good collection of songs and wanted to take the time to perfect and edit them."

After putting the material to tape, the group diverged for a brief foray into their own projects and prolific interests. Singer Tim Darcy released a scaled-back solo album, drummer Tim Keen honed his production skills, Stidworthy made a record in Denmark and Leeds (and worked in a graveyard), while keyboard player Matt May "developed a strong passion for the yardie end of grime." Artistically rejuiced, the gang got back together for summer dates with fellow Canadians the New Pornographers.

"I think we all had this deadline in the back of our minds when we would reunite to get back to tour, and I think that really excited us," offers Stidworthy. "Our energy is really high right now because we've grown as musicians and people."

He says the next album will unpack themes not limited to "perseverance, Corbyn/Brexit/Trump, and the world of love." Having forged their initial intense material in a communal living and practice



COLIN MEDLEY

space, their latest workspace in a locally legendary tower sounds just as creatively conducive and perhaps more idyllic.

"We had a window that looked out over the other side of the mountain and a train would speed past our space at uniform intervals," Stidworthy muses. "We witnessed some pretty unbelievable things there, but that's a story for another time."

— Rachel Rascoe

ARTISTICALLY REJUICED, THE GANG GOT BACK TOGETHER FOR SUMMER DATES WITH FELLOW CANADIANS THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS.

PASTOR CEDRIC B. WEST & THE ELECTRIFYING RELATIVES

11:15am, Tito's stage

While the band formerly known simply as the Relatives has seen its name grow exponentially, the basic formula of praising Jesus through soul shouting, stirring harmonies, and a touch of psychedelic soul remains intact. Pastor Cedric B. West takes the reins from his late father, Rev. Gean West, who led the band in the early Seventies and for a late-life revival culminating in a stirring pair of recent comeback LPs. (weekend one only)

— Thomas Fawcett

XAVIER OMÄR

11:30am, Barton Springs stage

Warm love notes characterize Xavier Omär's newest EP, *The Everlasting Wave*. Formerly known as SPZRKT, San Antonio's Omär is a true R&B artist, his silky croon lending itself to gospel and hip-hop elements throughout, with corresponding standout lyrics. Respect replaces the "bitches" and "ho's" of hip-hop. "It ain't about your body, it's about your being."

— Isabella Castro-Cota

DEVON GILFILLIAN

11:30am, BMI stage

Nashville soul burner unloads a gospel and blues-infused sound as raw as it is righteous. Last year, Gilfillian's eponymous debut EP grooved behind his smooth croon, gritty rock riffs, and funk influence. His Philly roots glisten, from the low-down "Travelin' Blues" and "Shortcut" to soulful "Here and Now" and new swampy jam of "Hole." (weekend one only)

— Doug Freeman

GRACE VANDERWAAL

1pm, HomeAway stage

Science and logic can't explain this 13-year-old wunderkind. Ever since her 2016 *America's Got Talent* win, the New York native has stolen hearts with her bellowing, Björk-like vocals, breezy ukulele picking, and humble approach to newfound fame. 2017 is a big year for VanderWaal since her ACL performance kicks off a tour following the release of first studio album *Just the Beginning*.

— Lauren Modery

Muna

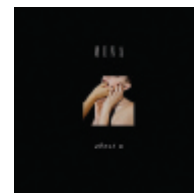
About U (RCA)

"If I feel like crying, I won't hide it," promises Muna's Katie Gavin in her affected, throaty voice, then adds, "I am a loudspeaker." Meanwhile, a mess of subdued Eighties electro-pop beats and bass throbs beneath her voice on the anthem of radical self-love. In many ways, "Loudspeaker" is a perfect thesis statement for the Los Angeles trio's debut: unapologetically vulnerable yet sonically glamorous. Grooving, hook-laden "I Know a Place" and "Crying on the Bathroom Floor" both pulsate, while "Winterbreak" slows to a mournful but electrified crawl. *About U*'s shuddering, dark pop captures both the glitz of L.A.'s pulsing nightlife and a tidal wave of emotion.

(12:15pm, Honda stage; weekend one only)

★★★

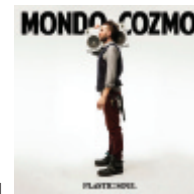
— Libby Webster



Mondo Cozmo

Plastic Soul (Republic)

Josh Ostrander played in obscurities Laguardia and Eastern Conference Champions, and produced like-minded acts for 15 years before going solo as Mondo Cozmo. The Philadelphian deftly mixes pop hooks, indie sincerity, and



studio trickery in ways both organic and calculated. Sampled voices contribute textural familiarity, electro beats enhance simple rock grooves, and Ostrander's thin rasp oozes conviction. "Thunder" and "Automatic" make quick impressions, but "Shine" brings it all home with an easily digestible anthem. As a title, *Plastic Soul* begs for trouble, but Mondo Cozmo turns its contradiction to virtue. (1pm, Barton Springs stage)

★★★

— Michael Toland

Pumarosa

The Witch (Fiction/Caroline)

London's Pumarosa surveys three decades of alt-rock on debut album *The Witch*, borrowing what they like (post-punk, early electronica, post-Bad Seeds melodrama) and discarding what they don't (grunge, hip-hop). James Neville's guitar shimmers as Henry Brown and Nicholas Owen's rhythms flirt with the dance floor while snuggling up to goth pop. Moving from droning anthem "Priestess" to the ethereal pop of "Red" indicates versatility, but also ADD. Fortunately, singer Isabel Munoz-Newsome channels her admiration for Siouxsie Sioux, PJ Harvey, and Savages' Jehnny Beth with every howl and moan, giving the tracks personality the music often lacks. (1pm, Miller Lite stage)

★★

— Michael Toland



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Allan Rayman

**Roadhouse 01
(Communion)**

Allan Rayman rose in mystery last year, the Toronto native maintaining a low profile despite the acclaim from debut LP *Hotel Allan*. Now, *Roadhouse 01* delivers Rayman to the spotlight, his harsh and graveled vocals layered over a genre-bent mix of R&B, indie beats, hip-hop, and intricate arrangements – like Alt-J tripping on the Weeknd. *Roadhouse* also unfolds a concept album narratively driven as a dark mirror to his own creative rise. “Wolf” opens in eerie creep to the soulful flow of “December,” but jazz send-up “Jim’s Story” breaks mold into the backside’s more experimental and aggressive rhythms (“Head Over Heels,” “13”). Complex and entrancing. **(1:15pm, Tito’s stage)**

★★★★

– Doug Freeman



Benjamin Booker

Witness (ATO/Rough Trade)

Ringingly fundamentally bluesy, with political punk inflections, singer-guitarist Benjamin Booker’s soulful second full-length straitjackets all of the Virginia/Florida/New Orleans dweller’s influences into 32 barbed minutes. Not specifically an activist statement, *Witness* tackles racism on the gospel-infused, Mavis Staples-backed title track, intoning terror via “Everybody brown can get the fuck on the ground.” Standout “Believe” finds a wandering Booker searching for answers: “I don’t care if it’s right or wrong/ I just want to believe in something/ How can I make it on my own?” **(3pm, Miller Lite stage)**

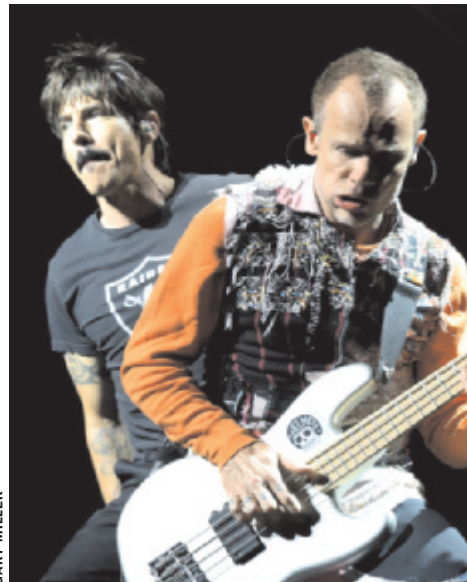
★★★

– Kahron Spearman



SATURDAY FACE-OFF

BY LIBBY WEBSTER



GARY MILLER



DAVID BRENNAN HALL

Parker Millsap

2:15PM,
TITO'S STAGE

“I think you can’t escape reflecting your background in some way, even if it’s abstracted,” notes Americana bard Parker Millsap, spending ACL’s two weekends promoting his third album, 2016’s *The Very Last Day*. “I find those kinda stories compelling. I think all art, even if it’s a Pollock and it’s abstract, half the story is Pollock. This story plays out in your mind of this madman throwing paint around. All art tells a story, sometimes in a literal way, sometimes in a more obtuse or abstract way. But it works just as well.”

Purcell, Oklahoma, born and bred, where a social life means congregating at the Pentecostal church thrice weekly, Millsap’s occasionally abstract lyricism can resemble Flannery O’Connor set loose on an old Martin D-28 guitar. He hardly began a troubadour, initially aspiring to be the next Stevie Ray Vaughan. Other Texans, like Townes Van Zandt, turned him toward finely crafted acoustic songs.

Possibly *Day*’s best tune, “Heaven Sent” assumes the perspective of a young gay man coming out to his evangelical preacher father, hoping for acceptance. Millsap says it’s caused some confusion.



“So, I hear you’re gay, and your dad’s a preacher! No, no, no!” he laughs. “I’m a straight dude who wrote a song! I’ve met a lot of people who are gay and were raised in a conservative place, and they were shunned because of it. They had to deal with shit other people didn’t have to deal with.”

“I saw that growing up. People would say things behind their backs to me. I wrote that song from that perspective, because I find perspective a great and effective storytelling tool. Most great authors don’t tell a story from their perspective. They make up characters and tell stories through them.”

– Tim Stegall

PURCELL, OKLAHOMA, BORN AND BRED, WHERE A SOCIAL LIFE MEANS CONGREGATING AT THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH THRICE WEEKLY, MILLSAP’S OCCASIONALLY ABSTRACT LYRICISM CAN RESEMBLE FLANNERY O’CONNOR.

Red Hot Chili Peppers

8:10PM, AMERICAN EXPRESS STAGE

aka: Chi Peps

Hometown: Hollywood

Active since: 1983

Number of albums: 11

Premise: Funk-soul-punk-sex-Californication

Influences: Sly & the Family Stone, Parliament-Funkadelic, Gang of Four

Breakthrough: 1991’s *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*

Claim(s) to fame: 3 Grammys, 60 million records sold, bassist Flea

Secret weapon: latest guitarist Josh Klinghoffer

Infamous moment: socks on cocks, Anthony Kiedis’ tell-all autobiography *Scar Tissue*

Fun fact: original name was Tony Flow & the Miraculously Majestic Masters of Mayhem

What they should play: “The Zephyr Song”

What they shouldn’t play: anything off of 1995’s *One Hot Minute* (sorry, Dave Navarro)

What to bring: at least one friend with whom to lip sync “Otherside”

Who you’ll see in the crowd: disaffected millennials pretending they’re there ironically (*cough*)

CAR SEAT HEADREST

2pm, Honda stage

Will Toledo’s slack-heavy outfit triumphed on last year’s *Teens of Denial* LP, revving up from the Virginia native’s previous lo-fi bedroom (er, backseat) recordings. The Seattle-based quartet rolls Pavement hooks and guitar jams into Toledo’s ennui-drenched narratives, late-night streetlight anthems for a new generation of the cynically restless and bored slouching toward melodic escape.

– Doug Freeman

Silent Disco

8PM, TITO'S STAGE

aka: quiet clubbing, quiet disco

Hometown: Scandinavia

Active since: early Nineties

Number of albums: 0

Premise: no speaker system, wireless headphones, several live DJ channels

Influences: 1969 Finnish sci-fi film *Ruusujen Aika (A Time of Roses)*

Breakthrough: Bonnaroo and Glastonbury have advertised it since 2005

Claim(s) to fame: Coachella, SXSW, silent event companies popping up across the U.S.

Secret weapon: F U N

Infamous moment: will report back after the first three nights at ACL

Fun fact: Quiet Events, which is organizing the ACL iteration, also hosts silent comedy and silent karaoke

What they should play: funk, Eighties pop, Beyoncé

What they shouldn’t play: anything played at weddings

What to bring: open mind, sensible footwear, your fun friends

Who you’ll see in the crowd: happy humans without a crippling sense of self-awareness, club kids, people who got lost on the way to Chance the Rapper or RHCP, disaffected millennials pretending they’re there ironically

A\$AP FERG

2pm, American Express stage

Atop chest-beating bravado and a sharp cadence, Harlem rapper Darold D. Brown Ferguson Jr. released sheer ferocity on hedonistic banger “Shabba” and the emotional expanse of “Hood Pope.” While his lines still swim in A\$AP Mob’s staple paranoid and dark production, *Still Striving* gleams with vulnerability in family musings “Plain Jane” and “The Mattress Remix” with just enough swag posturing.

– Alejandra Ramirez

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BASS-OFF

BY KEVIN CURTIN



Vulfpeck's Joe Dart

FRIDAY, 4:15PM,
AMERICAN
EXPRESS STAGE

Weapon of choice: Nineties, Mexican-made Fender Jazz Bass with Seymour Duncan antiquity II pickups

Playing style: humanly impossible sections of 16th notes, roller-coaster runs, and tasteful funk grooves

Uses a pick?: No, he plays that fast with his fingers.

Education: University of Michigan School of Music

Collaborations of note: Bernard Purdie, Antwaun Stanley, Bootsy Collins

Song demonstrating command: "Dean Town" from *The Beautiful Game*
Better than Flea? Yes

Thundercat

SATURDAY, 4PM,
TITO'S STAGE
(WEEKEND ONE ONLY)

Weapon of choice: Signature six-string hollow body Ibanez with whammy and phaser pedals

Playing style: smooth, proggy, jazz fusion with lots of arpeggiated chords, dissonant voicings, and up-the-neck solos

Uses a pick?: Are you fuckin' serious?

Education: joined crossover thrash heroes Suicidal Tendencies as a teenager and stayed nine years

Collaborations of note: Kendrick Lamar, Flying Lotus, Bilal, Michael McDonald, Kenny Loggins

Song demonstrating command: "Fleer Ultra" from *The Golden Age of Apocalypse*

Better than Flea? Yes

HOMEGROWN SATURDAY BY KEVIN CURTIN



MOBLEY (11:30am, Miller Lite stage, weekend one only) Agile pop/rock songman who plays keys, drums, guitar, electronics, and sings.

CAPYAC (12:15pm, Tito's stage, weekend one only) Wild surrealist dance party commingles smooth funk, electronica, and Euro disco.

RATTLETREE (12:30pm, Austin Kiddie Limits stage, weekend one only) Colorful sextet views Zimbabwean marimba music through the lens of electronic world-beat.

BLACK ANGELS (5pm, Barton Springs stage) Psychedelic hypnotists whose wavy frequencies bridge evil drone and Sixties pop.

SPOON (7pm, Miller Lite stage) Britt Daniel's critically beloved rock band hit a late-career milestone with this year's electro adventurous *Hot Thoughts*.

JOSEPH

3pm, Barton Springs stage

Sisters Allison, Meegan, and Natalie Closser unfurled intoxicating sibling harmonies across last year's breakout sophomore LP, *I'm Alone, No You're Not*, but the Oregon outfit's impulse toward heavy, swirling psych-folk and pulsing pop mesmerized beyond rising vocals. Freshly released EP *Stay Awake* settles more subtly, anchored by the gorgeously melancholic rework of "Everybody Wants to Rule the World." (weekend one only) – *Doug Freeman*

CODY JINKS

4pm, Honda stage

A North Texas country kicker known as much for ripping live shows as sharp, baritone-laced ballads, Cody Jinks may be the closest inheritor to Waylon Jennings' outlaw aesthetic. Credit the guitar fury to his previous metal outfit, but the past decade has honed his perfect throwback country sound, culminating in last year's underrated LP *I'm Not the Devil*.

– *Doug Freeman*

ANGEL OLSEN

5pm, Miller Lite stage

Rare is a vocal capacity both stirring and serene. Rich, vintage tone wraps the Asheville songwriter's melodies in a dark enchantment reaching maturity on last year's bold *My Woman*. Non-self-deprecatingly examining womanhood as an existence rather than niche subject, Olsen's third LP ranged personal, romantic, and tender behind her timeless croon.

– *Rachel Rascoe*

ICE CUBE

6pm, American Express stage

"Get me on the court and I'm trouble/ Last week fucked around and got a triple double." Like "It Was a Good Day," Ice Cube's present preoccupation is hoops. The 48-year-old gangsta rap legend just wrapped the inaugural season of his burgeoning 3-on-3 basketball league. While Cube has evolved from N.W.A to basketball CEO, the classic catalog that made him AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted remains as relevant and inflammatory as ever.

– *Thomas Fawcett*

RÜFÜS DU SOL

7pm, HomeAway stage

Unlike bombastic radio EDM, RÜFÜS du Sol offers clean and crisp electronics rooted in nü disco, deep house, and accompanied by soulful rasped cadences. As evidenced by sophomore disc *Bloom* (2016), the Australian trio disassembles eclectic sounds ranging from uptempo club hits like "Until the Sun Needs to Rise" to spacious expanses in "Innerbloom."

– *Alejandra Ramirez*

CHANCE THE RAPPER

8pm, Honda stage

Born and raised in the West Chatham neighborhood of Chicago, Chancelor Bennett came up with fellow rapper Vic Mensa in their Save Money collective. The former gained recognition with his second mixtape, the vaunted *Acid Rap*. The MC then made his mainstream push with the gospel/trap/club-influenced *Coloring Book*, released in 2016.

– *Kahron Spearman*



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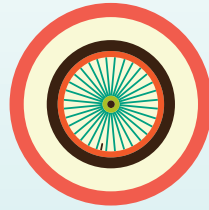
RIDE SHARE pick up and drop off located across the Mopac Pedestrian Bridge on Stephen F. Austin Drive and on Sterzing Street at Barton Springs Road.



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Need a ride? Use **RideAustin**, the official rideshare of ACL, they make rides affordable while doing good for the community. The pick-up/drop-off location is located on Veterans Drive (by Austin High), accessible from the festival by exiting the Lady Bird Lake Entrance and taking the Mopac footbridge across towards the tennis courts. New to RideAustin, download the app and enter promo code **ACLFEST17** for \$5 in credits. Limited supply available and valid only on ACL weekends.

Scheduled Closures

ZILKER PARK GREAT LAWN CLOSURE

Sept. 25 – Oct. 28 closed to the public
Oct. 20 festival load-out ends
Oct. 21 – 27 park maintenance

STRATFORD DRIVE CLOSURE

at Nature Center Dr & Barton Springs Rd
Sept. 27 & 28 7:00 am -10:00 pm daily
Oct. 6 12:01 am – Oct. 9 6:00am
Oct. 13 12:01 am – Oct. 16 6:00am
Oct. 17 & 18 7:00am – 10:00pm daily

BARTON SPRINGS ROAD CLOSURE

at Sterzing St & Rollingwood Dr
Residential traffic will be allowed to exit the neighborhood at Sterzing, eastbound to Lamar. All inbound traffic into the neighborhood is closed.
Sept. 30 3:00am – 7:00am
Oct. 6 12:01am – Oct. 9 6:00am
Oct. 13 12:01am – Oct. 16 6:00am

ROBERT E LEE ROAD CLOSURE

at Barton Hills & Barton Springs Road
Residential traffic will be allowed to exit the neighborhood on Robert E. Lee, East Bound onto Barton Springs from 12:00am - 11:59am on event days.
Oct. 6 12:00pm – Oct. 9 12:00am
Oct. 13 12:00pm – Oct. 16 12:00am

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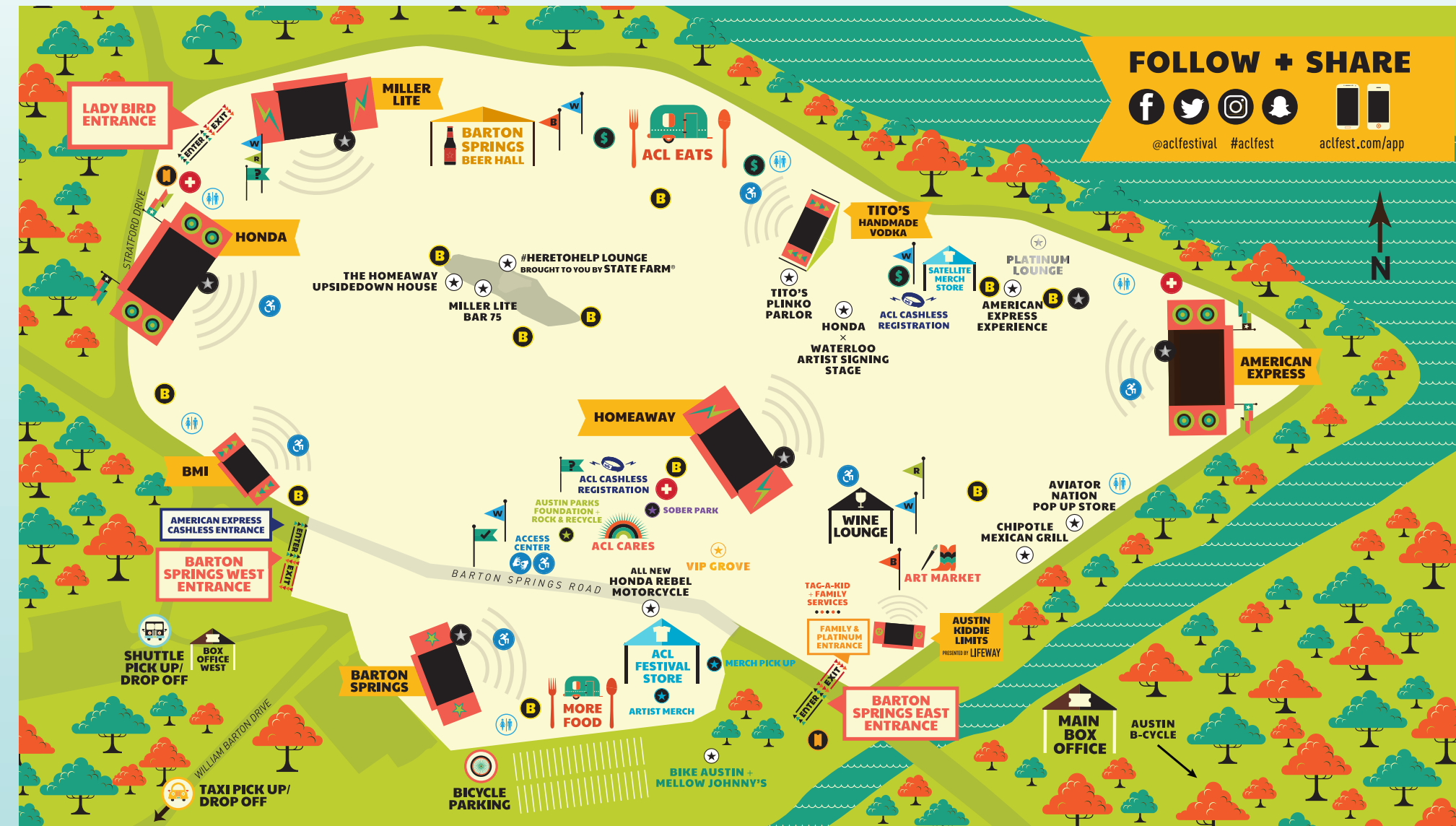
Families & Platinum ticketbuyers have a dedicated entrance on Barton Springs Road, just east of the Barton Springs East Entrance.

ADA Access & Accommodations: ACL Festival has special services for people with disabilities. Visit the Access Center near the Barton Springs entrances for more info.

Lost & Found: Visit aclfest.com/lostfound to view found items and file a claim or visit an Info Booth while on-site. After the Fest, found item pick-up will take place at Zilker Park on October 9-10 and October 16-17 from 12-6pm.

Tag-A-Kid: Stop by an Information Tent or the Tag-A-Kid Booth near the family entrance to register your child with the festival with a special wristband. If you get separated, we can connect you!

Safety First: The safety and security of ACL Festival attendees is our number one priority. For information on safety & security measures in place at Zilker Park, please visit aclfest.com/safety.



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Tank & the Bangas

11:45AM, HOMEAWAY STAGE

Since winning NPR's Tiny Desk contest this year, soul/hip-hop/poetry amalgamators Tank & the Bangas have gone into hyperdrive.

"It's a show almost every day instead of every other day," says vocalist/poet Tarriona "Tank" Ball, calling from a two-day stand at the Minnesota State Fair. "We're rarely home."

"Home" is New Orleans' 8th Ward, where Ball grew up. Her late father regularly won vocal talent shows, while her sisters excelled at church singing. Ball forged her own path, winning three National Poetry Slam championships with Team SNO.

"Poetry just kind of loved me back," she says. "It took a while for music and songs to love me back."

By the time she coalesced the Bangas in 2011 with ace drummer/musical director

Joshua Johnson, slam poetry had imbued her with a remarkable ability to connect with audiences.

"I'm being vulnerable with thousands of strangers almost every day of my life," she says. "It probably feels more natural than being vulnerable with my very own friends."

Tank & the Bangas pay homage to their city's musical heritage by evolving it. Their epic "Quick" unfurls like a big-budget film, progressing through a variety of genres and emotions on its way to a strategic peak. Ball fondly recalls listening to Stevie Wonder with her dad growing up, and it's not hard to spot parallels between her work and an audio masterpiece like "Living for the City."

Besides multifangled musical prowess, the septet's stage show is enlivened by the interplay between Ball and backing vocalist Anjelika "Jelly" Joseph. When it's suggested that the two of

them almost appear to be of one mind while performing, Ball laughs out loud.

"She has her own mind and I have my own mind," she says, "but we have a really good chemistry onstage."

— Greg Beets

TANK & THE BANGAS PAY HOMAGE TO NEW ORLEANS' MUSICAL HERITAGE BY EVOLVING IT.



▲ CHARLOTTE CARDIN

1:15pm, BMI stage

Montreal's Charlotte Cardin carries a croon way beyond her years. The 22-year-old's first EP, *Main Girl*, dropped last month on Atlantic Records, boasting six sultry cuts of soulful vox. Low-energy pop, Cardin's sound fits neatly with the likes of Adele and Amy Winehouse. (weekend one only)

— Libby Webster

JAMILA WOODS

1:30pm, Tito's stage

At a brilliant local set last spring, Chicago R&B singer Jamila Woods flipped schoolyard rhymes into Black Lives Matter anthems and covered a medley of old-school Destiny's Child and Mary J. Blige. Good bet she'll join Chance the Rapper to assist on "Sunday Candy," but as she proves on debut LP *Heavn*, an uplifting ode to black girl magic, she merits a bigger stage.

— Thomas Fawcett

DANNY BROWN

2:15pm, Honda stage

One of the most unique figures in contemporary rap, Detroit MC Danny Brown burst through with 2011's debauched *XXX*, released on A-Trak's Fool's Gold label. Even so, 2016's excellent *Atrocity Exhibition*, named after a J.G. Ballard novel and Joy Division song, finally thrust him out of semi-novelty into serious critical acclaim.

— Kahron Spearman

Jacob Banks

The Boy Who Cried Freedom (Darkroom/Interscope)

The Boy Who Cried Freedom is a blink-and-miss-it five-song, 15-minute EP. Fortunately, 26-year-old Nigerian-born, UK-bred singer-songwriter Jacob Banks makes a quick impression. Layered rings of "Chainsmoking" unfold a bluesy moan and chain gang stomp before Banks chokes out lyrics in a gospel growl over synths and electric guitars: "It's getting harder to breathe; chainsmoking your love can't be good for my sanity." That same plaintive howl marks gospel-tinged modern R&B on "Mercy" and "Unholy War," but results vary when he veers from that lane. "Photograph" reveals a bitersweet acoustic soul vibe, but suffers from odd lyrical phrasing. (1:15pm, Barton Springs stage; weekend one only)

★★★

— Thomas Fawcett



The Growlers

City Club (Cult Records)

Fifth Growlers LP *City Club* feels distantly familiar. Dirty psychedelia and surf rock elements remain, tied together by Brooks Nielsen's drunken, raspy drawl, but it's matured. Less noise, more synth, and slight whippers of Strokes 2001 abound, fitting since the latter's Julian Casablancas produced. Consistently knee-bending, the opening title track teases nostalgia with fuzzy guitar then cuts sharply to cleaner strings without losing its retro. Slower, darker selections are abundant ("Night Ride," "Blood of a Mutt"), but grimy and groovy dance anthems overshadow ("Dope on a Rope," "Neverending Line").

(5:15, Miller Lite stage)

★★★

— Isabella Castro-Cota



Run the Jewels

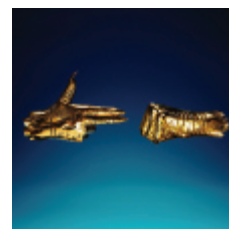
RTJ 3 (Run the Jewels Inc.)

Manifesto of mayhem, beastly bi-metro duo Run the Jewels further fuses El-P and Killer Mike into a two-headed lyrical monstrosity. Directly confronting "masters" of the universe and their often deadly institutions with gallows humor and perforating sincerity, the producer/MC pairing advocates (if necessary) social unrest on "Thieves! (Screamed the Ghost)" and announce themselves as maimers of the contextual via "A Report to the Shareholders/Kill Your Masters." Their best work and most politicized, *RTJ 3* is the battle cry of triumphant satyrs looking for a bloody good time.

(6:15pm, Honda stage)

★★★★

— Kahron Spearman



RAINBOW KITTEN SURPRISE

2:15pm, American Express stage

Rainbows, kittens, and surprises this quintet is not. Instead, their smoky vocals and twangy guitar conjure whiskey, cigarettes, and night drives on country roads. At first you might think you're listening to Kings of Leon, but with two albums under their belt, the North Carolina group has begun making its name on the festival circuit. — Lauren Modery

RAGING FYAH

2:30pm, Tito's stage

This Kingston-born reggae act stays busy since netting a Grammy nom this year for third album *Everlasting*. They've also launched their own marijuana strain, Raging Fyah's *Everlasting Kush*. Often cited as one of contemporary reggae's best acts, their feel-good beats, which expertly straddle the genre both old and new, have been compared to legendary fellow Kingstons, Third World.

— Lauren Modery

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Badbadnotgood

IV (Innovative Leisure)

Toronto jazz-hop quartet Badbadnotgood have graduated, leveling up craft and textural richness on cohesive fourth full-length *IV*. Saxophonist Leland Whitty's permanent inclusion into the fold stretches and fills out the band's sound, producing rounded, and more sure-footed pieces – as both a traditional band unit and beatmaker hive. The album's best track, smoky R&B-tinged "Time Moves Slowly," features the primal growl of Future Islands' Samuel T. Herring. "Confessions, Pt. II" is a modern epic, highlighting the supreme talents of Whitty and talented reedist Colin Stetson. **(6:15pm, Tito's stage)**

★★★★



– Kahron Spearman

Portugal the Man

Woodstock (Atlantic)

In 2011, these Alaskans joined Atlantic Records for *In the Mountain in the Cloud*, then teamed up with acclaimed producer Danger Mouse for the eclectic *Evil Friends* (2013), so why not aspire to new commercial heights on *Woodstock*? Built along their psych rock foundations, rock bombast ("Live in the Moment," "Rich Friends") and EDM ("Number One," "Easy Tiger") are favored over the group's messier edges of prog ambition. "I'm a rebel just for kicks now" states "Feel It Still." It's not only a hollow testament, it's a sell-out. **(7:15pm, HomeAway stage)**

★★★



– Alejandra Ramirez

SUNDAY FACE-OFF

BY KAHRON SPEARMAN



GARY MILLER



SHELLEY HIAM

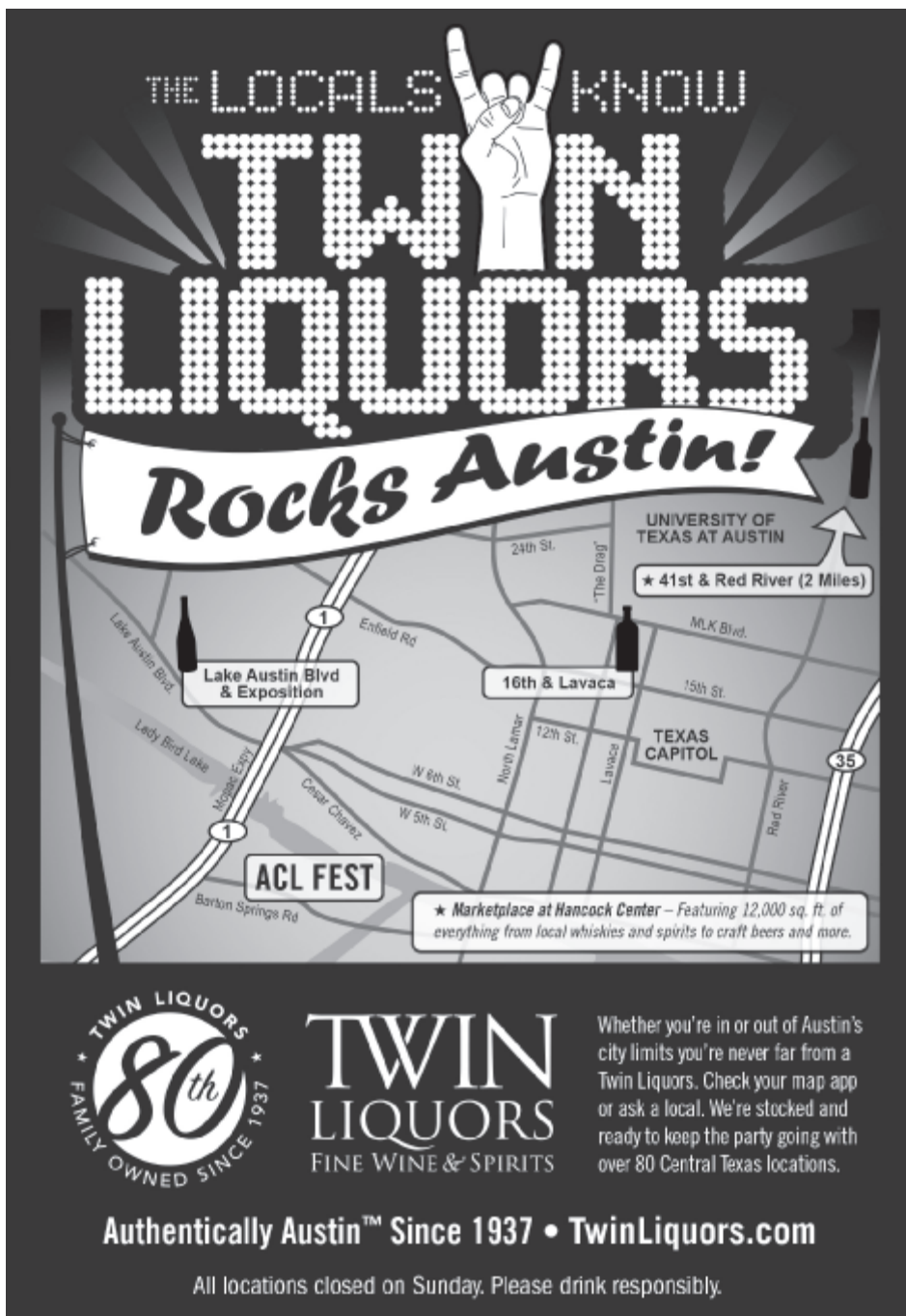
Gorillaz

8:15PM, HONDA STAGE

Government name(s): Damon Albarn, Jamie Hewlett**Hometown:** Essex, England**Active since:** 1998**Genre:** anime-pop**Number of albums:** 5**Precursor acts:** The Archies, Jem & the Holograms, the Banana Splits**Secret weapon(s):** drummer Cass Browne and keyboardist Mike Smith**Breakout moment:** "Clint Eastwood" video in which the face of guest MC Del the Funky Homosapien is never seen**Song they should play:** "Feel Good Inc." and "Stylo," of course**Song they shouldn't play:** "We Got the Power" from *Humanz***Stereotypical fan:** Blur fanatic, into Japanese anime, knows the backstories to the virtual band members**Best lines:** "There was crack on the corner and someone dead/ And fire coming out of the monkey's head" ("Don't Get Lost in Heaven")**Fun fact:** There were once talks of a film involving Terry Gilliam**Last show in Austin:** Frank Erwin Center, Oct. 22, 2010**Factoid:** They're drawn

The Killers

8:15PM, AMERICAN EXPRESS STAGE

Government name(s): Brandon Flowers, Dave Keuning, Mark Stoermer, Ronnie Vannucci Jr.**Hometown:** Las Vegas**Active since:** 2001**Genre:** alternative glam**Number of albums:** 5**Precursor acts:** Springsteen, New Order, Mike + the Mechanics, U2, the Cars**Secret weapon(s):** Flowers' lyrical earnestness**Breakout moment:** debut of "Mr. Brightside" on Zane Lowe's old BBC radio show**Songs they should play:** most of *Hot Fuss***Songs they shouldn't play:** most of *Sam's Town***Stereotypical fan:** Levi's only, New Balances for support and comfort, #maga acolytes**Best lines:** "Well, somebody told me you had a boyfriend/ Who looked like a girlfriend" ("Somebody Told Me")**Fun fact:** Flowers was fired from his first band**Last show in Austin:** Cedar Park Center, May 10, 2013**Factoid:** Flowers credits growing up Mormon with helping him not go all rock star


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LAST YEAR, THE SYDNEY TRIO'S FIRST SINGLE, "EDGE OF TOWN," HAD ELTON JOHN DECLARING HIMSELF A FAN AND SUBSEQUENTLY CATAPULTED MIDDLE KIDS INTO THE SPOTLIGHT.



MACLAY HERIOT

Middle Kids

1:15PM, MILLER LITE STAGE

Singer-guitarist Hannah Joy bubbles with a warm enthusiasm. Currently, the 26-year-old songwriter for Sydney's Middle Kids feels only positivity. Last year, the trio's first single, "Edge of Town," had Elton John declaring himself a fan and subsequently catapulted Middle Kids into the spotlight – before the band had played a show or released an EP.

"I think [that song] captured a feeling or an experience for a lot of people," muses Joy. "The song embodies that feeling of freedom, but the whole story is about not being in control and not knowing as much about anything as you thought you did. I love all the instrumentation on it and being able to swing my voice around."

Joy, a classically trained pianist, had never been in a rock band or played guitar until she started Middle Kids with bassist Tim Fitz and drummer Harry Day.

"It's a cool new way of songwriting for me, because I'm still finding my way around a guitar," Joy explains. "It means that everything is a little bit more stripped back, simplified, and it's more about the melody and the lyrics."

This year's self-titled, six-song EP, released via Domino in North America, is equal parts elation pop and melancholy rock. Joy's priority for Middle Kids remains songs people can sing along to. Although the EP wasn't written until after the group catapulted into the spotlight, "Edge of Town" was still the songwriting catalyst.

"It wasn't, 'Oh shit, we need new songs' but, 'Oh, this feels so good and now there's this song, and this song!'" reveals Joy.

"The songs were pouring out."

– Libby Webster

CONTINUED ON P.20

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SKIP MARLEY**4:15pm, Tito's stage**

Born in Jamaica and raised in Miami, the 21-year-old Bob Marley grandchild puts a contemporary spin on roots reggae. No debut album yet, but he's collaborated with Katy Perry and his single "Lions" soundtracked the infamously tone-deaf Kendall Jenner Pepsi ad attempting to brand-fuck Black Lives Matter.

— Thomas Fawcett

DRAM**4:15pm, Honda stage**

From the big cheesy smile on his debut album, *Big Baby D.R.A.M.* (2016), Shelley Massenburg-Smith's joy and happiness is palpable. The Virginia rapper's voice warbles and froths like a warm bubble bath in bedroom ballad "Wifi," the smooth R&B of "Monticello Ave.," and the playful, Lil Yachty-assisted "Broccoli." Giddy and undeniably youthful.

— Alejandra Ramirez

THE HEAD & THE HEART**6:15pm, American Express stage**

The Head & the Heart could have easily been lost in the indie folk-pop rise and wane of the early decade, yet even the Seattle outfit's harmony-rich 2011 debut hinted at more possibilities. Last year's third LP *Signs of Light* continued to expand the sextet's sonic explorations, with more percussion-driven rock influence and touches of throwback soul.

— Doug Freeman



SANDY KIM

**▲ VANCE JOY****7:15, Miller Lite stage**

Aussie crooner Vance Joy rode his ubiquitous hit "Riptide" from 2014 debut *Dream Your Life Away* into a 2015 ACL Fest set. This year, he returns with the already radio-rich single "Lay It on Me." Previewing a much-anticipated sophomore disc due next year, Joy's earnest, emotional ballads and gentle tenor burst with backing by rich horns and percussion.

— Doug Freeman

ZHU**7:30pm, Barton Springs stage**

Chinese American DJ/producer Steven Zhu chose anonymity until 2014. That year's EP, *The Nightday*, shed the cloak with high-charting single "Faded," which propelled him into electronic stardom. 2016 saw the release of major label debut *Generationwhy*, an album of mid-tempo and Balearic dance-influenced stalkers.

— Kahron Spearman

Whitney

3:15PM, BARTON SPRINGS STAGE

Light Upon the Lake, the debut from Chicago country soul duo Whitney, brims with despondency while simultaneously comforting you to carry on. Product of former Smith Westerns members Max Kakacek and Julien Ehrlich, soft strings and tepid melodies entwine with drums and uplifting horns beneath Ehrlich's hushed falsetto to bring you nostalgia and lyrical gloom. Kakacek spoke from a small, isolated cabin in Rhododendron, Ore., where the duo retreated to write a follow-up.

"After touring for a year, we thought it'd be nice to be in the middle of nowhere," he chuckled.

Whitney's music is characterized by its humility. "No Woman" slowly welcomes you as the trumpet ascends and Kakacek's strings lull you along. Then ballads such as the title track ground the listener as Ehrlich murmurs, "Will life get ahead of me?" Remember it upon your next heartbreak.

"The way the music sounds when we were first coming up with the project, that kind of melancholy dictated the lyrics we were writing," recounts Kakacek. "The songs we're writing now are instilled with this idyllic national forest with beautiful hikes all around."

Light Upon the Lake remains sympathetically sweet throughout.

"The first time, listen to the album someplace very peaceful and quiet that feels comfortable," he instructs. "I don't know, after your first kiss or something, you know?"

— Isabella Castro-Cota

PRODUCT OF FORMER SMITH WESTERNS MEMBERS MAX KAKACEK AND JULIEN EHRLICH, SOFT STRINGS AND TEPID MELODIES ENTWINE WITH DRUMS AND UPLIFTING HORNS.

First Aid Kit

5:15PM, HOMEAWAY STAGE

Klara and Johanna Söderberg craved some semblance of normalcy, so in 2015 they finally took a break. The explosive success of dreamy Americana folkers First Aid Kit saw the Swedish sisters navigate a whirlwind of nearly nonstop touring for five years — including an early Friday afternoon slot at ACL back in 2012.

"We started touring at 16 and 18, and that was all that we knew, so we needed to just go home and live a 'normal' life," says Klara. "That's part of [making a record], just collecting and experiencing things. That's the writing process."

First Aid Kit's first new music since 2014's *Stay Gold* came out earlier this year, yielding stand-alone single "You Are the Problem Here." The angry, feminist, overtly political rock & roll cut proved a far cry from First Aid Kit's discography.

"It was born out of a moment: reading about rape cases and just feeling absolutely distraught," Klara explains. "It wasn't planned. We weren't like, 'Let's write a political song.'"

"We've been moving away from the gentleness of the past, and definitely in terms of our live show," adds Johanna.

New single "It's a Shame" also finds First Aid Kit navigating new musical terrain: their most upbeat sound. Hopeful and warm behind buoyant piano and a galloping drum line, the Söderbergs' intertwining vocals spell out crippling self-doubt.

"It's a song written out of desperation and loneliness, to be honest. The fact that it sounds upbeat — that just happens," Klara explains. "We always like doing that. I think it can be really impactful to have a sad lyric with a different sounding song. It hits you in a different way."

— Libby Webster



THE EXPLOSIVE SUCCESS OF DREAMY AMERICANA FOLKERS FIRST AID KIT SAW THE SWEDISH SISTERS NAVIGATE A WHIRLWIND OF NEARLY NONSTOP TOURING FOR FIVE YEARS.

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AC FOOD FIGHT: BURGERS

WE DREAM OF CHEESEBURGERS AT ACL EATS

Sure, other vendors have tacos, wraps, and sandwiches – Torchy's, Burro Cheese Kitchen, and Way South Philly are all on deck – but when you're stomping around the festival grounds, \$50 Budweiser tall boy in hand, what you really need is a cheeseburger. ACL Eats offers three options, and we've pro/con-listed the whole shebang.

– Jessi Cape

 Wholly Cow Burgers	 P. Terry's Burger Stand	 Shake Shack
Second marriage diamond upgrade, with filigree	College-kid engagement diamond	Elizabeth Taylor's ring from Richard Burton
Diners	Drive-Ins	Dives
King's Hawaiian Sweet Roll	Designed by Mrs. Baird herself (or a minion, anyway)	Martin's potato roll
We're curious to see the ACL-specific menu, but this joint is known for options: veggie patty, grilled veggies, mushroom cap "buns," wheat buns, and Udi's gluten-free buns.	The house-made veggie patty – created by chef Andrew Brooks – is a local fast-food favorite, regardless of sobriety level.	Their 'Shroom Burger – deep-fried portobello mushroom filled with Muenster and cheddar cheese – might actually be better than the original.
Checkerboard paper wrapper	Plain paper wrapper	Plain paper wrapper
The hand-cut fries – regular or sweet potato – are the best ones of the group.	Crispy, thin-cut Idaho potatoes – not their strong suit, but that's what ketchup's for.	Crinkle-cut, just like your working mom used to heat. (Pray for cheese fries.)
The least social media bedazzled of the trio, festivalgoers might luck out here.	Probably substantial, but they're used to it. Besides, true love waits.	Probably long, because this national chain has some die-hard fans.
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AUSTIN'S PIZZA You can't go wrong with some simple pepperoni or cheese slices from a hometown favorite. www.austinspizza.com.

BANANARCHY REVOLUTIONARY DESSERTS Frozen bananas dipped in chocolate are practically a health food. www.bananarchy.net.

BURRO CHEESE KITCHEN Using artisan bread, small-batch cheeses, and creative sauces and jams, these sammies take a childhood staple to the next level. www.burrocheesekitchen.com.

CHI'LANTRO Where Korean cuisine meets BBQ; try the house-made kimchi fries. www.chilantrobbq.com.

EAST SIDE KING This Japanese street food is worth the wait. www.eastsideking.com.

GOODPOP These local frozen pops are so good they'll balance out the junk food. www.goodpops.com.

HIGH BREW COFFEE Cold-brewed coffee in a can?! Mexican vanilla FTW. www.highbrewcoffee.com.

JUICELAND Let these fresh juices and smoothies refresh your dancing legs. www.juiceland.com.

KABABEQUE Mediterranean plus South Asian flavors equals can't-miss dishes like chicken shawarma and falafel wraps. www.kababequetx.com.

LAMBA'S INDIAN KITCHEN Traditional North Indian cuisine with curry for days. www.lambasindiankitchen.com.

LONGSOME DOVE WESTERN BISTRO Maybe it's rattlesnake-rabbit sausage, maybe it's truffle mac & cheese, but whatever chef Tim Love's team serves will hit the spot. www.lonesomedoveaustin.com.

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MICKLETHWAIT CRAFT MEATS This East Austin food trailer does barbecue right, and their vinegar-based slaw adds the perfect complement. www.craftmeatsaustin.com.

MIGHTY CONE If you're a newbie to ACL, stop what you're doing and try the Crunchy Avocado Cone - it's designed specifically for this festival. www.mightycone.com.

MMMPANADAS Empanadas are fest favorites: self-contained pockets of deliciousness, with options for veggies and carnivores. www.mmmpanadas.com.

P. TERRY'S BURGER STAND Hometown burgers - see the Food Fight! www.pterrys.com.

PELI PELI Get a sneak peek of the award-winning chain's South African dishes like beef tongue and chicken schnitzel, before they open in the Second Street District. www.pelipeli.com.

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