

20 ALBUMS YOU MAY NOT HAVE HEARD,  
CHAMPIONED BY 20 MUSICIANS YOU REALLY SHOULD HAVE

# THE ESQUIRE JUKEBOX

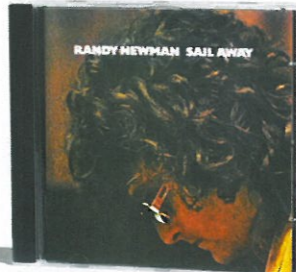
EDITED BY TOM MACKLIN

01

## SAIL AWAY BY RANDY NEWMAN

(1972, REPRIS)

RECOMMENDED BY **BRIAN WILSON,**  
**THE BEACH BOYS**



*Sail Away* is one of my favourite albums of all time and one that I felt slipped under the radar. For me, this was a standout record of Randy's because, for its time, it was incredibly advanced and uniquely written, produced and sung. He is such a talented songwriter and I loved Randy's voice. I remember a friend introduced me to this album when I was in Holland recording The Beach Boys' *Holland* and *Fairy Tale Music*, and I played it over and over in the house we were renting in Laren. The artwork was an iconic side profile shot of Randy looking downward. I personally feel it didn't get anywhere near the recognition it should have. It was like an underground album. God, I loved it. Still do.

02

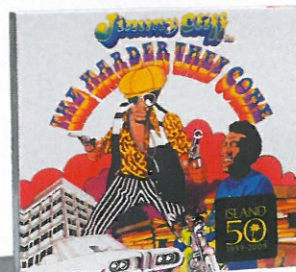
## THE HARDER THEY COME (OST) BY VARIOUS ARTISTS

(1972, ISLAND)

RECOMMENDED BY **SUGGS, MADNESS**



I used to hang out at the Hope & Anchor in Islington, and one guy would give you these slimming tablets called "tombstones". We had to take about 40 to get any sort of buzz. One time, we went to the Screen on the Green. They had a Jamaican film marathon, and this is how I discovered *The Harder They Come*. The film featured these "rude boys" smoking weed in Jamaica, getting charged up and making this fantastic music. It was a real eye-opener. "The Harder They Come" by Jimmy Cliff is the song that sticks out most for me. I'd heard of Jimmy before, but there were a lot of bands I wasn't aware of. It was definitely an affirmation. It was a reggae greatest hits before they were hits.



03

## BURNING BLUE SOUL BY MATT JOHNSON

(1981, WARNER/4AD)

RECOMMENDED BY **JOHNNY MARR**

*Burning Blue Soul* came out in '81, and was a rarity even then. A DIY underground soundtrack made by a young man for his own head in his own times. It's the sound of an intrepid musical and psychic explorer in his complicated world; naive, paranoid and brave. It's also genuinely psychedelic without any of the trippy clichés that word usually evokes. I've given so many copies away because I wanted someone to hear it.

04

## BE BY COMMON

(2005, GOOD MUSIC/GEFFEN RECORDS)

RECOMMENDED BY **TINIE TEMPAAH**

This is a perfect fusion of live instrumentation mixed with digital production — a good example of early Kanye West [production], which attracted me to this in the first place. It has a narrative from the very beginning to the end. There's poetry and spoken word, amazing samples, beautiful lyrics about love, lust, church, faith, parenthood and Chicago (the city he is from) — and a lot of explicit language. "Go!" was the biggest single from the album, but I also love "Testify" — it's very vivid, has an amazing twist and makes great use of a sample from Honey Cone's "Innocent 'Til Proven Guilty". Common says a lot of provocative things and after hearing *Be*, I've always tried to adopt a bit of that into my music. I chose this record because it is how I would like to evolve as an artist (in my own way, of course). It's special to me as it evokes memories of being at the stage in my life where I had just finished school and was thinking about how I was going to be able to do what I do now.

05

## INSPIRATION INFORMATION

BY **SHUGGIE OTIS**

(1974, EPIC RECORDS)

RECOMMENDED BY **JAMIE CULLUM**

Shuggie Otis was a blues and r'n'b guitar prodigy. He made a couple of records that were great in their chosen genre and then went away for three years and made the completely original *Inspiration Information*, which merged his love of blues and r'n'b with electronic drums, jazz, offbeat song structure and eccentricity to create a supremely trippy soul record. He played nearly all the instruments himself on this long before Prince (who cites him as a big influence) was making records like this. Don't be fooled by that reference, though — this is a slow burner of a record that will gradually get under your skin and never leave. Amy Winehouse introduced me to this record — I didn't know her that well, but we toured together at the start of her career and our friendship consisted of playing pool and talking about music. She put Otis' track "Aht Uh Mi Hed" on a mix for me and I loved its dreamy psychedelic soul straight away — a mix of D'Angelo, Os Mutantes, Marvin Gaye and DJ Shadow. It's definitely a tour bus record for me. I've gone on to play it to every member of my band, and they have in turn fallen in love with it. It is also a headphones record, that benefits from a solitary experience of its beauty and sheer oddness.

06

## ACCELERATOR BY ROYAL TRUX

(1998, DRAG CITY/DOMINO)

RECOMMENDED BY **BOBBY GILLESPIE,**  
**PRIMAL SCREAM**

I first heard it in California when I was on holiday. I was heading to San Francisco — drove down Highway 101 and hung out with a guy called Steven Hanft, who had done the video for [Primal Scream's single] "Kowalski". He had a copy of *Accelerator* and he put it on and it was like... woah. I'd heard their stuff before but this was another level. It just blew my mind. They did stuff that nobody else has done — modern, experimental rock'n'roll, with some amazing arrangements. The first song "I'm Ready" is like an ultra-violent glam-rock football chant. Then "Juicy Juicy Juice" is like sex-funk-zombie-disco-rock. Then later there's sci-fi rock'n'roll, a sad but lonely and defiant space-blues, and the last song is a great funkadelic ballad. The band was Jennifer Herrema and Neil Hagerty, one of the great rock'n'roll couples. They were mixing technology with rock music and no one else was really doing that. I was obsessed with this record at the end of the Nineties. I'd talk to kids in record shops; they'd chat to me about Primal Scream, but I'd ask them about Royal Trux. If they'd never heard of *Accelerator*, I'd just buy 'em the record.

07

## NIGHTHAWKS AT THE DINER

BY **TOM WAITS**

(1975, ASYLUM RECORDS)

RECOMMENDED BY **KELLY JONES,**  
**STEREOPHONICS**



Tom Waits' first live album, recorded in 1975 in the Los Angeles Record Plant Studios in front of a small audience. Tom is one of the finest lyricists in music. The imagery and sarcasm in songs like "Eggs and Sausage" is so warm and they always make me hungry. "Eggs and sausage, and a side of toast... Hash browns over easy / Chilli in a bowl, with burgers and fries, what kind of pies?" The accuracy in his editing of description is startling. "In a graveyard charade a late-shift masquerade." His one-liners between tracks are always funny: "Making a scene with a magazine." I love it. It never fails. It's a record you can drive to, drink to, and recover on a Sunday afternoon to. It's so good, it actually feels like you're sitting in a diner with an amazing band playing in front of you. Tom Waits has made many amazing records and he's the one artist I will always buy new music from. If this is a record you have never heard of, then today is the first day of a new beautiful adventure of storytelling, juxtaposed with his gravel growl and chaotic backing tracks. Pick it up and don't look back.

08

## BRICK BY BRICK

(1977, BANG/MAGIC CITY)

RECOMMENDED BY **JAMIE XX, THE XX**

Brick were formed in Atlanta, Georgia in 1972 and their style was a fusion of funk and jazz. I discovered this album in Toronto last year, while I was looking for music to sample. I love the track "Living From the Mind", one of the most upbeat and dance-y numbers on the record. I've started playing it in my DJ sets now, the cheery and euphoric sound sits well alongside the harder electronic numbers.

09

## MALADJUSTED BY MORRISSEY

(1997, ISLAND)

RECOMMENDED BY **BRANDON FLOWERS,**  
**THE KILLERS**



Morrissey made a comeback with his album *You are the Quarry*, but for me the album that came before it, *Maladjusted*, was Morrissey at his best. It was the soundtrack to me becoming 16 and getting a car — the album was on heavy rotation on the stereo. A few months later in 1997, I saw Morrissey on Halloween in Salt Lake City, and it was incredible. He previewed songs from *Quarry*, but for me the highlights were the songs he played from *Maladjusted*. I stood right there, you know, to songs like "Alma Matters", "Trouble Loves Me" and "Roy's Keen". "Trouble Loves Me" is such a perfect pop song, and quintessentially Morrissey. I remember doing interviews when I was young; pop became such a dirty word. We should never be ashamed of a great pop record.

