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It feels strange to point this out during a year in which so many bad, no good, completely awful things have happened but: 2020 was a really good year for music! There were a number of great records that seemed to have been made about 2020, even though they obviously weren't. And there were records that felt like antidotes to the madness we were experiencing each and every day via our social media feeds and front windows. Music can be a mirror, and it can also be a balm. This year abounded with examples of both. Before we head into 2021 with hopes that it will be a better year than the last, let's look back at some of our favorites from 2020 here at Indie Mixtape HQ.

-- Steven Hyden, Uproxx Cultural Critic and author of [This Isn't Happening: Radiohead's "Kid A" and the Beginning of the 21st Century](#)

In case you missed it...

Our [YouTube channel](#) grew substantially this year, and is now the home to a collection of vintage music videos from Faith No More, Jane's Addiction, Echo & The Bunnymen, Flaming Lips, and more.

[Catch up](#) on everything **Indiecast** before we kick off 2021 with new

episodes.

Do **The Killers** have a [new record](#) coming soon?

The new **stimulus bill** [includes](#) \$10 billion earmarked specifically for music venues and promoters.

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OPENING TRACKS



PHOEBE BRIDGERS

Even during a year in which the music industry was mostly grounded, Phoebe Bridgers still managed to feel like a breakout star. That's partly due to her deftness at generating social-media excitement out of pretty

much anything — even a Goo Goo Dolls cover — but her second album *Punisher* also delivers where it counts.

LISTEN



HUM

If you were a beloved indie band that hadn't put out an album in a long while, 2020 likely was a good year for you. Fiona Apple, The Strokes, The Killers, and Bright Eyes all had worthy comebacks. But nobody revived themselves quite like the '90s era Midwestern sludge-pop institution Hum.

LISTEN



YOUNG JESUS

This Los Angeles band works the no man's land between the indie and jam scenes, though they ultimately lands more on the side of epic old-school guitar acts like Modest Mouse and Built To Spill. Drawing inspiration from both free jazz and the Dave Matthews Band, Young Jesus goes for the emotional jugular.

LISTEN

DEEP CUTS



DAVID NANCE

Like so many true blue-collar middle American rockers, this Nebraska singer-songwriter worships at the altar of Neil Young and Crazy Horse, though on *Staunch Honey* he turns down the guitar fuzz a bit so that the rough-hewn melodies and relentless choogle rhythms can come through with greater clarity.

LISTEN



JEFF PARKER

For most of his career, this multi-instrumentalist has been best known as a member of Tortoise. But on his own, Parker put out his highest-profile and best-received album yet with *Suite For Max Brown*, a song cycle that touches on the same sonic regions as Tortoise but in a gentler kind of way.

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VINYL OF THE WEEK

**FLEETWOOD MAC — '1973-1974' 4LP + 7"
(COLORED VINYL)**



In the span of one year, the Fleetwood Mac lineup shifted several times.

All of these different incarnations are showcased in this boxed set compiling one of the band's most prolific periods. Included in this set are *Penguin* (1973) on yellow vinyl, *Mystery To Me* (1973) on orange vinyl, *Heroes Are Hard To Find* (1974) on gold vinyl and an unreleased concert from 1974, *Live At The Record Plant*, on white vinyl. As a final touch, the set also includes a 7" single with "For Your Love" (Mono Promo Edit) on one side and the previously unreleased "Good Things (Come To Those Who Wait)" on the flipside on Blue vinyl.

PICK IT UP

THROWBACK

'ODESSA' by THE BEE GEES



If you saw HBO's recent and very good documentary *How Can You Mend A Broken Heart*, you might be interested to dig into the band's psychedelic period in the 1960s, highlighted by this lush *Sgt. Pepper*-esque epic.

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LINER NOTES



SONG VS SONG

Lately we've been enjoying the *Song Vs. Song* podcast. Dive in to hear some funny, insightful conversations about music!

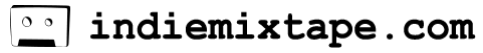
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