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Given the state of the world right now, putting out an album called *Things Are Great* seems like either an irreverent joke or an act of insane optimism. But for Ben Bridwell of Band Of Horses, it's really just a declaration that he is, after a series of albums marked by compromise, finally doing things his way. *Things Are Great*, which dropped on Friday, is a conscious return to the brawny, vision-quest-y rock of Band Of Horses' mid-aughts era, when they first roared to indie fame on the strength of their 2006 debut, *Everything All The Time*. Their next album, 2007's *Cease To Begin*, continued their winning streak, spawning a hit, the affecting ballad "No One's Gonna Love You." After that, Band Of Horses entered the major-label world, signing with Columbia for their third LP, 2010's *Infinite Arms*. The band's output gets spottier after that, an outcome that the candid and self-effacing Bridwell blames on his own lack of self-confidence. Too often, he says, he's let other people goad him into artistic decisions he didn't fully believe in. It's all revealed in our [interview](#) where Bridwell discusses each Band Of Horses album.

-- 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...

The most recent *Indiecast* visualizer is about Gang Of Youth's latest album, *Angel In Realtime*. Check that out above or right [here](#). Revisit the full library [here](#).

The latest episode of *Indiecast* had Steven and Ian [reviewing](#) the new album by Band Of Horses, their first in six years. They also talked about artists beefing with stans and Bandcamp selling out. Send your questions to indiecastmailbag@gmail.com for a change to appear on the show.

Arcade Fire [teased](#) a new era of music by sending cryptic postcards to fans in the mail.

Liam Gallagher [agreed](#) when **Dave Grohl** called him 'one of the few last remaining rock stars.'

Bandcamp was [acquired](#) by tech company Epic Games, who is the parent company of popular video game Fortnite.

The latest **Indie Mixtape 20 Q&A** is with [KAINA](#), the Chicago native whose recent album *It Was A Home* is meant to bring comfort.

OPENING TRACKS



BARTEES STRANGE

In 2020, this 33-year-old singer-songwriter emerged as one of most exciting new artists in indie by releasing two startling albums, the National covers album *Say Goodbye To Pretty Boy* and the all-originals *Live Forever*. Now he's back with a new single, "Heavy Heart," which hopefully portends a new LP.

LISTEN





THE WEATHER STATION

This artist otherwise known as Tamara Lindeman specializes in incisive, insightful songwriting set to warm, organic sounds that evoke the glory years of sensitive tunesmiths in the 1960s and 70s. Following up last year's acclaimed album, *Ignorance*, she's just put out *How Is It That I Should Look At The Stars*.

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NILÜFER YANYA

This buzzy British singer-songwriter was a breakout artist back in 2019, thanks to an eclectic amalgam of influences suggesting that Yanya ultimately wants to fuse the slinky grace of Sade with the sort of chunky and lovably punk anthems associated with Blink-182 and Libertines. Her new LP, *Painless*, came out last week.

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DEEP CUTS



M. J. LENDERMAN

On his own, Wednesday guitar M.J. Lenderman plays a more straightforward kind of choogle, favoring funky country licks and leaning into his back-porch vocal twang. The first single from the upcoming *Boat Songs*, “Hangover Game,” is one of the album’s best tracks, with Lenderman singing the praises of Michael Jordan over chunky guitars.

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CARACARA

This Philadelphia band is usually classified as emo — think *Bleed American* era Jimmy Eat World — but their forthcoming album *New Preoccupations* due March 25 also has a heavy '90s alt-rock vibe. By that we mean the guitars are big and shiny and the lyrics are dark but earnest.

Dig in!

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VINYL OF THE WEEK

METALLICA - 'METALLICA' DELUXE LEATHER JACKET BUNDLE



Metallica’s eponymous album, better known as *The Black Album*, is remastered and available as a massive box set. The Black

Album is one of the most commercially successful LPs of all time and is newly remastered and ready for purchase as a bundle including a double LP, "Sad But True" picture disc, three live LPs, 14 CDs and six DVDs featuring unreleased content (live shows, rough mixes, demos, etc), a Metallica tour bomber jacket, and more.

PICK IT UP

THROWBACK

'SHIELDS' by GRIZZLY BEAR



This 2012 album by the Brooklyn art rockers wasn't as acclaimed as their 2009 breakthrough *Veckatimest* but we here at Indie Mixtape HQ have always found it to be underrated. "Sleeping Ute" is a beaut!

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LINER NOTES



Steven Hyden's Favorite Music Of February 2022

Catch up on music with this
round-up column.

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