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Nobody can ever accuse [Big Thief](#) of laziness. Not only is the band prolific — since 2016 they have released five albums, including one double-LP, while maintaining a packed tour schedule — but the individual members are also constantly busy with their own projects. Case in point: When I caught up with guitarist-songwriter Buck Meek this week, it was several hours before the penultimate show of Big Thief's summer tour with Lucinda Williams, which concluded the following day in Los Angeles. Later this month, he will begin another tour in support of his own upcoming solo album, *Haunted Mountain*, due August 25. I was thankful that Meek found the time to talk with me. While I admired his two previous solo LPs, 2018's *Buck Meek* and 2021's *Two Saviors*, his latest record feels like a real breakthrough. A self-described collection of on-the-road love songs, *Haunted Mountain* adds layers of instrumental muscle to Big Thief's lean and sparse folk-rock template, with Meek's gnarled guitar supported by the supple, countrified warmth of his long-time backing band. The result is a record that rocks a bit harder than much of Big Thief's output, while retaining the band's hopeful, mystical spiritualism. [Read my interview with Meek here.](#)

-- Steven Hyden, Uproxx Cultural Critic and author of five books, most recently [Long Road: Pearl Jam And The Soundtrack Of A Generation](#)

In case you missed it...

The 1975 was ordered to pay over \$2 million to a Malaysian festival organizer or face legal action.

Mick Fleetwood's Hawaii restaurant burned down in the Maui wildfires, he announced.

Big Thief's *Dragon New Warm Mountain* era is over, and what's next might be even better.

Our latest Indie Mixtape 20 Q&A is with **Strange Ranger**, who transcends indie rock on their latest album *Pure Music*.

OPENING TRACKS



OSEES

This garage-rock institution never sits still for very long. While John Dwyer has also busied himself with solo work and side

projects, he's back with the lip once again on the forthcoming *Intercepted Message* (due Friday), which is previewed by the reliably kinetic and punchy-as-hell title track.

[LISTEN](#)

RATBOYS

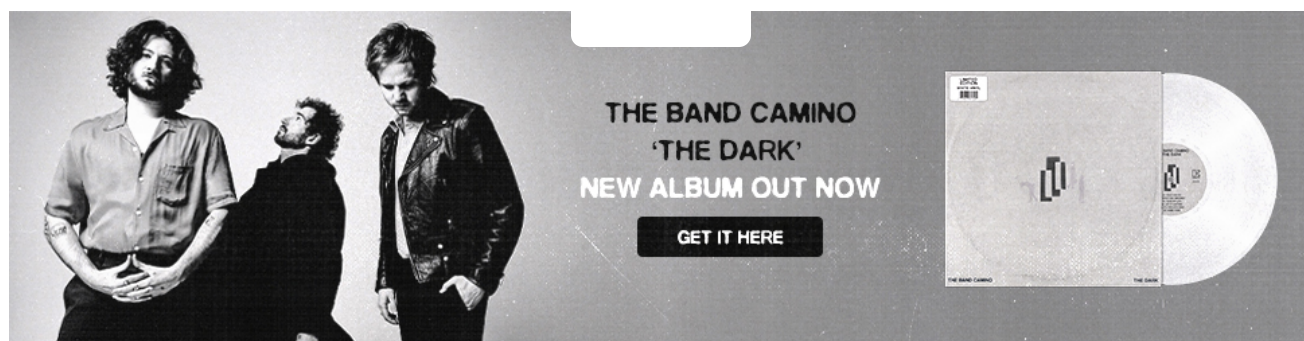
A recent single by this very likeable Chicago band is one of my most replayed songs of the year. At more than eight minutes, "Black Earth, WI" is the long, epic guitar jam of the summer. The LP due August 25, *The Window*, should be similarly great.

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FIELD MEDIC

This prolific singer-songwriter also known as Kevin Patrick Sullivan is influenced by Bob Dylan but he's the opposite of retro. He writes heartfelt, lo-fi dirges that commingle personal introspection, political anxiety, and absurdist one-liners. His next LP, *Light Is Gone 2*, finds Sullivan moving in a more electronic direction.

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DEEP CUTS



SLOW PULP

This Chicago-by-way-of-Madison indie band made some waves with their 2020 debut *Moveys*, though progress was blunted somewhat by the pandemic. Therefore, the forthcoming *Yard* (due out September 29) seems doubly consequential, especially since it shows off their impressive range, which veers from alt-country to introspective folk to zippy guitar pop numbers.



HURRY

This Philly band writes impossibly pretty and catchy pop-rock songs that instantly evoke some of the greatest and most enduring indie rock — Big Star, Teenage Fanclub, Guided By Voices. Those are big names to live up to, but the new *Don't Look Back* delivers on the promise.

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VINYL OF THE WEEK

'SOVIET KITSCH' by REGINA SPEKTOR — LP

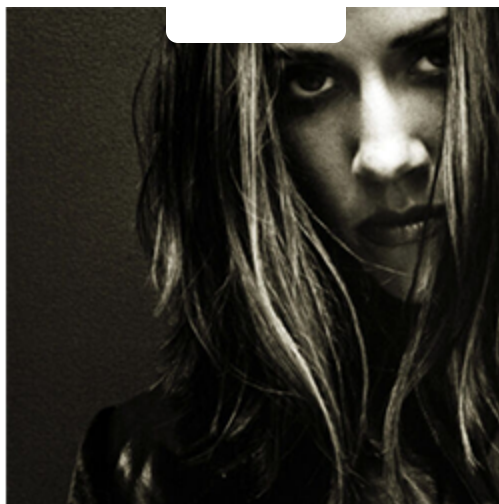


Pick up Regina Spektor's much-loved third studio album, *Soviet Kitch*. This limited edition is pressed on translucent yellow vinyl.

[PICK IT UP](#)

THROWBACK

'SHERYL CROW' by SHERYL CROW



It's true that the second Sheryl Crow album would not have qualified as "indie" when it was released in 1996. But in 2023, it's hard to imagine the sound of contemporary indie without it. Everybody from Soccer Money to Boygenius can draw a line directly to this record.

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LINER NOTES



Indiecast Episode 150

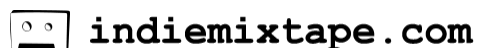
On the latest episode of Indiecast Steven and Ian discuss the Song Of The Summer.

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