



# 10 of the best . . . Summer sounds The Star Holiday Guide



## 1 Beside You: 30 Years of Hits Dave Dobbyn

KIWI music icon Dave Dobbyn is celebrating 30 years in the music business with a comprehensive CD release and a summer tour. Dobbyn won't make it south with his "30 Years of Hits Summer Tour" this month, but southern fans will get the chance to see him with Tim Finn, Bic Runga, Boh Runga and Che Fu when the More FM Winery Tour comes to Millbrook Resort in Arrowtown on February 15. In the meantime, fans can turn to the three-disc retrospective *Beside You: 30 Years of Hits*. Featuring 39 tracks dating back to the days of Th' Dudes through to the present day, the two CDs include gems like *Be Mine Tonight*, *Outlook for Thursday*, *Just Add Water*, *Loyal*, *Slice of Heaven*, *Welcome Home* and *Hallelujah Song*. Disc 3 is a DVD featuring live archive footage, interviews and classic videos. With his distinctive voice, brilliant melodies and very kiwi outlook on life, Dave Dobbyn is a local favourite for good reason. So, put your feet up, pour a cool drink and let the sounds of home wash over you.

— BRENDA HARWOOD



## 2 The Resistance Muse

**OFTEN** feted as one of the world's best live acts, British alt rock band Muse has built a huge international following for its extravagant live performances. The multiple award-winning trio comprises Matthew Bellamy (vocals, guitar, piano), Christopher Wolstenholme (bass, backing vocals) and Dominic Howard (drums). As with all of the band's releases, *The Resistance* brings together an extraordinary fusion of musical styles, especially progressive rock, electronica and classical. Alongside the familiar Muse sound — tight rock with stunning vocals — the album takes surprising swerves through R&B and Eurasian styles and is at times pure Queen. Bellamy has also let his classical side shine through on this album, playing Chopin's *Nocturne in E Flat Major* as part of the epic *United States of Eurasia*, and a rearranged segment from Saint Saens' *Samson and Delilah* as part of *I Belong to You*. The album concludes with the extraordinary *Exogenesis* symphony in three parts, performed with full orchestra.

— BRENDA HARWOOD



## 3 Puzzle Biffy Clyro

IF you are yet to discover the complex yet melodic sounds of Scottish rock three-piece Biffy Clyro, *Puzzle*, released in 2007, is where you want to start. Known for their unusual chord sequences and time signatures, interwoven guitar riffs and construction of songs with frequently changing melodies and shifting dynamics, Biffy Clyro's fourth studio album masterfully blends the string and choir orchestrations of New Zealand composer Graeme Revell with the band's own engaging and highly energetic vocals, bass, drums and guitar. Employing everything from the glockenspiel to the saxophone and set against the violins, violas and cellos of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, *Puzzle* delivers 13 tracks of solid rock to keep your musical tastebuds salivating all summer.

— JAMES BOUCHER



## 4 Porchlight Delgirl

**DUNEDIN folk-alt country trio Delgirl are back with a new and more mature album in *Porchlight*.**

**Recorded in the Catlins over winter and released a couple of months back, *Porchlight* showcases the growing confidence of Deirdre Newall (double bass, bodhran), Lynn Vare (percussion, snare drum, tenor ukulele and banjo) and Erin Morton (guitar, trumpet and ukulele).**

**Characterised by Delgirl's trademark close harmonies and featuring songs by each of the three band members, *Porchlight* explores the human condition through such topics as freedom, murder, love, childhood and more.**

**Stylistically, the album ranges fairly widely, encompassing sounds of country music, bluegrass, laments, folk and gospel.**

**The overall feeling is that of coming home to a warm fire.**

**Delgirl's first album *Two, Maybe Three, Days Ride* won a Tui Award for best folk album last year and *Porchlight* is a worthy successor.**

— BRENDA HARWOOD



## 5 Holy Smoke Gin Wigmore

RECORDED with The Cardinals, of Ryan Adams and The Cardinals fame, Gin Wigmore's full-length debut album *Holy Smoke*, released this year, guarantees we'll be hearing more from the 23-year-old Auckland-born singer/songwriter.

*Holy Smoke's* eclectic blend of songs pay homage to the artist's wide range of musical influences, from the '50s to the '70s, while at the same time retaining a fresh and original sound of their own.

Gin twists her raspy vocals effortlessly around aspects of blues, soul, pop music and good old-fashioned rock and roll to create what is probably the hippest sound in the New Zealand mainstream today.

*Holy Smoke* is a great introduction to an artist who will no doubt be around for years to come.

— JAMES BOUCHER



## 6 Backspacer Pearl Jam

**BACKSPACER**, Pearl Jam's ninth studio album, is the shortest, yet most upbeat and unapologetically positive album the band has ever made. The album sees the return of long-time Pearl Jam collaborator and producer Brendan O'Brien, who helped usher the band into what was previously the most mature phase of their career with the 1998 album *Yield*. Unlike previous efforts, however, *Backspacer* wastes no time with politics and is completely devoid of dreary filler songs. The first Pearl Jam album to feature lyrics written exclusively by Eddie Vedder since 1994's *Vitalogy*, *Backspacer* is a collection of solid rock and roll tunes far removed from the early '90s Seattle grunge scene the band emerged from. The first three songs on the album — *Gonna See My Friend*, *Got Some* and *The Fixer* — set the tone with nearly 10 minutes of heart-pumping, energetic tunes straight out of the gates, while ballads, such as album closer *The End*, provide Vedder with more than enough room to stretch his vocals.

— JAMES BOUCHER



## 7 Them Crooked Vultures Them Crooked Vultures

THE term "supergroup" can be met with mixed reactions, though few can argue the intrigue and anticipation that has surrounded Them Crooked Vultures — consisting of Dave Grohl (Nirvana, Foo Fighters), Josh Homme (Queens of the Stone Age) and John Paul Jones (Led Zeppelin). The band's first offering, the self-titled *Them Crooked Vultures* (2009), largely consists of heavy groove-based songs centred around an incredibly tight rhythm section. Their songs seem to be melodically driven by Homme, whose input shapes the higher register of their sound. As one could expect, the musicianship throughout is superb. The 13-track album kicks off with *No one Loves Me and Neither Do I*, in which hooky vocal melody coupled with a "pots and pans" percussion aesthetic gives way to a head-nodding groove which seamlessly changes up and down key and tempo, further conveying that the members of this band are indeed the real deal. *Them Crooked Vultures* is a highly enjoyable listen, fulfilling if not exceeding expectations.

— JEREMY CLARK



## 8 Salmonella Dub Salmonella Dub

**SYNONYMOUS** with summer in New Zealand, Kaikoura-based reggae-dub-roots outfit Salmonella Dub is back with a new album, *Freak Controller*. Released late last month, the album combines the talents of core quartet Andrew Penman (guitar), Pete Wood (guitar), Mark Tyler (bass) and David Deakins (drums) with various contributors, including Whirimako Black, The Mighty Asterix, Paddy Free, Ants and MC Mana. In its 7th studio album, Salmonella Dub has gone back to its roots, creating a driving, dynamic and live-feeling album that will have listeners dancing the summer nights away. Although peppered with familiar sounds, such as the band's signature bass, brass and percussion sounds, *Freak Controller* has a fresh energy that is good to hear. The varied contributions of the album's collaborators add to the varied, exciting feel of the music. The two-CD limited edition of the *Freak Controller* package contains a bonus disc, entitled *Outa Control*, featuring four tracks written with guest artists during the album's recording process.

— BRENDA HARWOOD



## 9 The Great New Zealand Songbook: Various artists

FAVOURITE New Zealand songs from "the last century and this century" feature in *The Great New Zealand Songbook* collection.

Incorporating 40 New Zealand recording artists, including Split Enz, Dave Dobbyn, Opshop, Big Runga, Brooke Fraser, Supergroove, Shihad, The Chills, Dragon, The Muttonbirds, The Exponents, The Feelers, Scribe, Hollie Smith and Goldenhorse, this two CD set will provide perfect sounds for the summer barbecue.

Listeners can sing along to hits such as *Dominion Rd*, *Why Does Love Do This To me?*, *April Sun in Cuba*, *Counting The Beat*, *Nature*, *Home Again* and *Not Many*.

*The Great New Zealand Songbook* offers a cross section of musical styles and approaches, from the past 30-plus years.

The CD set features cover art of the Four Square Man holding a guitar. This art work, by New Zealand artist Dick Frizzell, was commissioned for the release. The set also includes four coloured Frizzell postcards.

— BRENDA HARWOOD



## 10 Salsa Around The World: Various artists

*SALSA Around The World* is a wonderful CD which is sure to get you grooving whether you know the right dance steps or not!

The CD makes for great summer listening and would be the perfect background to a barbecue lunch or dinner with friends, or as after-dinner party music which is bound to get people on their feet.

Salsa originated in the Caribbean, but the songs on this CD are testament to the global appeal of Latin music — there are tracks from a range of countries including Scotland, Japan, Finland and India, each retaining the elements of salsa but incorporating their own flavour as well.

Salsa means "sauce", which appropriately describes its spicy style.

So, why not spice things up a little this summer and introduce yourself to *Salsa Around The World*?

— HELEN SPEIRS