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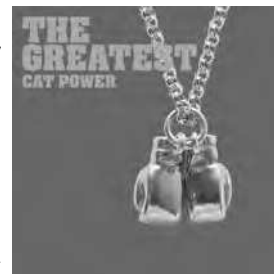
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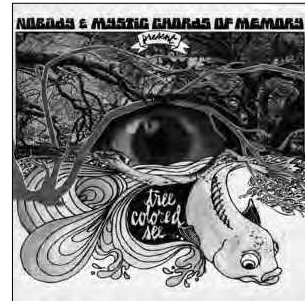
enough to fall in love (John Darnielle, I'm looking at you). On the other hand, two of my favorite bands failed to deliver: Cursive with *Happy Hollow* and And You Will Know Us By the Trail of Dead with *So Divided* (their lackluster show at the Crystal Ballroom earlier this month didn't help, either). But let's talk about the good stuff! Band of Horses and The Thermals top the list because they never fail to lift my spirits, Band of Horses with their sweetly balanced serving of acoustic guitar and distortion, The Thermals with pogoing politicisms dished up though Hutch Harris' unmistakable voice. Neko Case can do no wrong. The Yeah Yeah Yeahs' *Show Your Bones* took some getting used to but then couldn't be pried out of the CD player, mostly due to the gorgeous, oddly buoyant "Cheated Hearts." TV on the Radio's "Wolf Like Me" might be single of the year, honest. Mates of State have been doing the hyperactive husband-wife harmonizing thing for a while now, and here's it's buffed to perfection. Cat Power's "The Moon" is another astonishing single track. Bound Stems I could be making a mistake on; I just got the CD for my birthday, but it's like Modest Mouse and ... and ... oh, and a lot of other fun, smart guitar rock bands made hot little babies, and I trust the person I got it from, so it stays. DeVotchKa's *Curse Your Little Heart* is only an EP, but their live show at the WOW was so good they deserve a spot regardless. And the Twilight Singers creep into the top ten with *Powder Burns*, a welcome return to their signature bourbon bombast.



Nobody Makes Good Music (and So Do the Others)

Name: Todd Cooper
Paying the Bills By: Pointing, shooting, making boxes bigger or smaller
File Under: Santa's sucka free playlist
Extracurricular activities: Making funny voices, baby bouncing, diaper changing timed trials
Looking Ahead: My screen is so bright, I gotta wear shades

Nobody and the Mystic Chords of Memory, Tree Colored See (Mush)
Elvin Estela (Nobody) paired up with the Mystic Chords of Memory to make one of the most beautiful and overlooked albums of the



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