

WHAT WE ARE DOWNLOADING

It's summertime and the downloadin' is easy ...

Here at *Eugene Weekly* we are lovers of print, there's no denying it. Books, newspapers, magazines, food labels — whatever. That said, we're no Luddites, either, and from conversations around the office to chats in the checkout line at Kiva downtown, we find ourselves focusing on what we are downloading. From podcasts to games to television to music, we fill our iPhones, Androids, laptops and tablets with media we can plug into and play as we hide from the heat outside.

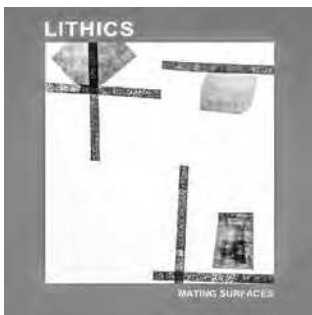
Here are a few of our favorites.



MUSIC

Disjointed Grooves

Mating Surfaces, the 2018 Kill Rock Stars debut from Portland art-rockers Lithics, builds angular and disjointed grooves that initially seem to be going all directions at once before coalescing into a kind of oblique internal logic and playfully aloof sense of humor. Vocalist Aubrey Horner murmurs artfully inscrutable word soup while guitars and drums battle for prevalence. She draws unlikely connection between everyday objects: an edible door, a mating surface. Occasionally her steely gaze lands on the mundane: a glass of water, a flat rock. She holds up objects, inspecting them with the anthropological curiosity of a space alien. Overall, *Mating Surfaces* is anxious and over-cafeinated post-punk: think Gang of Four or Devo. It's a little like wandering through the windstorm of modern media overload, disconnecting with the chaos and emerging on the other side emotionally, and refreshingly, just fine—because to fully embrace the trauma would fry every last circuit on the board. — Will Kennedy



Melting Pot of Pop



Art-pop eight-piece **Superorganism** came out of the gates swinging this year with its self-titled full-length debut. The group's style is a melting pot of pop, avant-garde, psychedelic and random sound effects. Seriously, check out their NPR Tiny

Desk performance. One member is blowing through a straw into a cup of water; another is splashing liquid in a bucket next to the mic. Although it's wacky, *Superorganism* is far from disorganized or sloppy. Its sound is well-curated, layered and mixed with precision throughout the 10-song album. Songs range from throbbing psych-pop jam “Something For Your M.I.N.D.” (led by effortlessly cool,

slacker vocals akin to a modern day “Loser” by Beck) to “Night Time,” a synth-heavy tune packed to the brim with joy, perfect for sunny car rides. Reminiscent, and honing the best parts, of bands like Flaming Lips, Tame Impala and early MGMT, *Superorganism* is a must-have on any summer playlist. — Meerah Powell

Rotating POST-

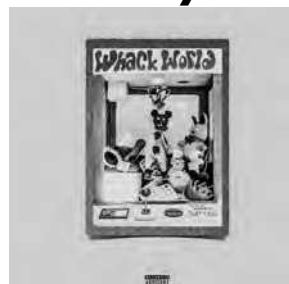
Jeff Rosenstock's newest full-length album, **POST-**, has been on heavy rotation in my house, probably because of its overwhelming relevance to this current point in time and space that we're occupying as Americans. (Also, it's just a really great album). It's full of frustration and anxiety mostly revolving around the big bad revelation that there's nothing we can really do as individual citizens to affect the political climate or, needless to say, the world at large



— “What's the point of having a voice when it gets stuck inside your throat?” Rosenstock sing-screams in the track “Yr Throat.” *POST-* finds balance in ferocious, no-holds-barred aggression at points, and melancholy gut-punches at others. It asserts the defeated realization of an “every-man-for-himself” mentality, while still holding dear the importance of love and support from friends. Veteran musician Rosenstock, formerly of ska and punk acts like The Arrogant Sons of Bitches and Bomb the Music Industry!, makes his frustrations and nervous energy tangible through fast-paced tracks like “Powerlessness” and pounding sing-along anthems like “Let Them Win.” If you're a fan of this album, make sure to catch Rosenstock live. He's probably the only musician I can say I've seen play the saxophone and crowd surf at the same time. — Meerah Powell

Whack in the Best Way

Tierra Whack's **Whack World** is true to its name. It's wacky, but in the best possible way. The album, Whack's debut, shuffles through rap, hip-hop and R&B territories in a series of 15 one-minute vignette-esque songs. *Whack World*



is accompanied by a visual music video album available on YouTube, blurring the lines between art and music, or rather, revealing that the two can occur simultaneously, and brilliantly. Even without the visual accompaniment, *Whack World* stands on its own. Each one-minute track is a window into the creative mind of Whack. Songs jump effortlessly into each other with no choppiness, even if their styles are opposing. Though a relatively new artist, at least as far as recorded work goes, Whack's flows are on-point and unique. *Whack World* was clearly curated with ingenuity and is a testament to the fact that not every masterpiece of an album needs to be at least a half-hour or longer. — Meerah Powell

Janelle Monáe's Futuristic Album Sends You Dancing



Dirty Computer, Janelle Monáe's third studio album, was released in April, combining relevant Afrofuturism with progressive feminism, queer liberation and — importantly — really, really catchy music. Monáe, who recently told the public

that she identifies as pansexual, uses her black queer femininity to create an utterly unique sound for the android age.

One of the most exciting parts of the album is the late-icon Prince's collaborative efforts. Prince's DJ Lenka Paris said Prince wrote the synth line for one of the album's singles, “Make Me Feel,” and to me it sounds like “Kiss.”

Other collaborators include Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys and singer-songwriter Grimes, who is also infamous for being involved with Elon Musk of Tesla. Tessa Thompson, an actress who is blowing up on the big screen and said to be romantically involved with Monáe, appears in the visual album — “emotion picture” — for “Dirty Computer,” and fans are really all about it.

My favorite songs on *Dirty Computer* are “Crazy, Classic, Life,” “Take a Byte” and “Pynk.” They're dance tunes and true earworms. The whole album should inspire you to take a deeper look into the Afrofuturist movement and encourage you to check out the art coming from queer people of color. When the world feels totally out of my control, I'll put my faith in Monáe. — Taylor Griggs