

**RANDOM HAND**  
INHALE/EXHALE (REBEL ALLIANCE)

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In the year or so following their inception, Keighley's RH were a glorious collision of sharp ska and rat-a-tat metal, with their 'On The March' EP a thunderous clarion call. Now, a couple of years later with some of the rough edges smoothed, their bite has been muzzled, even if their fire still burns bright. "In" is what System Of A Down would sound like if they'd been brought up on The Wailers rather than Armenian folk, and 'The Eyeballs Of War' seethes like an outnumbered army marching to war, but 'Mass Producing Monsters' and 'Anger Management' (despite entirely annihilating The Rev's hilarious claim to be the only artist speaking out on, like, issues) only bring well-worn imagery to the agit-punk table. **Ben Patashnik**  
DOWNLOAD: 'Roots In The Crowd'

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**GOLDEN BOOTS**  
WINTER OF OUR DISCOTHEQUE  
(PARK THE VAN)

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Golden Boots' latest trippy comedown claims to examine American themes of lackadaisical paranoia. OK, so we're not too sure what lackadaisical paranoia is, but if it sounds like four lethargic misfits running on empty down Route 66 in a clapped-out Mustang, then this Arizonan quartet have it in spades; their melancholic take on psychedelic pop even makes Beck seem like an over-medicated cheerleader. Yet their sedated Brian Jonestown Massacre melodies, subdued prairie wind blues and sparse Bukowski lyrics (witness 'Makebelieve's gem of "I found someone else's arm/Up my sleeve") take alt-country apathy and sprinkle it with a fistful of ramshackled charm. **Kat Lister**  
DOWNLOAD: 'Makebelieve'

**SERGEANT BUZFUZ**  
HIGH SLANG (BLANG)

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Sergeant Buzfuz are wacky, quirky and possibly zany - but don't hold it entirely against them. They come on strong with a late-'90s bedroom indie vibe that you'd have thought would render them only of interest to Eddie Argos and Steve Lamacq, but their peculiar brand of odd-pop is actually rather more universally charming. 'High Slang' is the fourth Buzfuz album and plays host to parts 2, 3 and 4 of the epic 'Here Comes The Popes', a heartfelt educational romp through the naughty bits of Catholic history. 'Mothership Zelda' lets the side down with its Gong-meets-Hefner dirge, but 'God To Holloway' melds early, unhinged Pink Floyd with the Britpop jangle of The Kinks. Nutty but nice. **Leonie Cooper**  
DOWNLOAD: 'Here Comes The Popes' parts 2, 3 and 4

**DAN AUERBACH**  
KEEP IT HID (V2)

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As the singer/songwriter/guitarist half of The Black Keys, it should come as little surprise that Dan Auerbach's solo debut is a ramblin', shamblin' authentic take on 'ver blues', characterised by some primal howlin' like the Wolf. There's a song called 'Heartbroken, In Disrepair', and another called 'Street Walkin'. The cover displays our bearded hero hunched over an acoustic. By now you have either yawned yourself to death or got one of the younger generation to order this for you on the interweb. All is as it should be with the world. **Liam Cash**  
DOWNLOAD: 'Street Walkin'

**DARREN EMERSON**  
BOGOTA GU36 (GLOBAL UNDERGROUND)

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One of the architects behind Underworld, veteran beat monkey Darren Emerson has had a while to hone his game. Making good on his promise to focus as much on himself as the artists on his Global Underground label, this latest trip (from a set in Bogota) is bookended by his old band and packs in a fair few of his own cuts. Its timing may be spectacularly seasonally wrong (it's essentially two hours in Pacha split into 29 tracks), and most of the big builds never quite hit sufficient climaxes, but it's still a pretty robust slab of trancey house. **Tim Chester**  
DOWNLOAD: Josh Wink, 'Counter Culture 319'

**DEATH**  
...FOR THE WHOLE WORLD TO SEE  
(DRAG CITY)



Only the garage-rock obsessive in you can be aware of Death made some of the visceral proto-psych imaginable back in '70s Detroit original seven-inch of their only 'Politicians In My Eyes', now ch hands for silly money, but for non-vinyl junkies - is inclu (albeit in squeaky clean CD form). And while the crackles may be it - along with the other six tra here - is essential for anyone in with the fuzz. **Hamish MacBain**  
DOWNLOAD: 'Politicians In My Ey



# Golden newbies



**SKY LARKIN**  
THE GOLDEN SPIKE  
(WICHITA)

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All those comparisons to a certain bunch of Britpop also-rans are just plain lazy...

**G**iven the sprightly nature of their fizzing pop-punk, we're almost certain Sky Larkin are not a testy bunch. If they were, this trio hailing from Leeds (singer Katie and drummer Nestor) and London (bassist Doug) might have left for lands less judgmental than these following the

number of pet peeves - if not theirs, then certainly ours - that have been aired in the run-up to the release of their debut. Firstly, they've been compared to Sleeper, the microwavable burger of Britpop, on more than one occasion. This, of course, is tantamount to being declared less valuable to culture than channel Five. The only saving grace in

this is another irritant - the sole for the comparison appears to be the gender of the frontpersons is to be the same.

Katie and her band differ by w great, uplifting, lo-fi pop. That's to say we can't compare Sky Lar to other lady-fronted bands, tho Sleater-Kinney (Sky Larkin rec this in Seattle with the righteou rockers' producer, John Goodm Pretty Girls Make Graves (the punky 'Keepsakes' especially). Ida Maria (her with the nasal, f yet impressively bold voice) ma suitable bedfellows being - pre key this - far closer to Sky Lark sharp sound.

What else might irk them and right-hearing people away is Sk Larkin's (mis)association with mimsy indie after their tours w The Research and - horror of b collecting indie horrors - Los Campesinos!. This in spite of S Larkin's fondness, displayed ho fleetingly on 'The Golden Spike QOTSA, Patti Smith, prog (the a mused-up Mars Volta in 'On Of Two' and 'Geography'), Son and a glorious pop melody. In M too, they've got one hell of a dr who would be equally suited to away in metal bands, as well as a panoply of thundering - but, still perky and shimmering - gui

With songs based loosely on archaeology ('Fossil, I'), lonely wrecks ('Molten') and a guide t to achieve some joie de vivre, e by way of atomic structure ('Be even if this trio lack real edge a anything in the way of an earth shattering song, Sky Larkin ha least had a go. That they'll sell records than Sleeper is thus an bigger crime. **Chris Parkin**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Fossil, I' 2) 'One of Two' 3) 'Keepsakes'



Hear 'The Golden Spike' first  
NME.COM/ARTISTS/SKY-LAR