

festering on the roster for a while, as well as actual legends, Eightball & M.J.G., Killer Mike never took well to typical industry filibustering. Young Dro, however, is patient and ever enthusiastic, just like I was for those first couple of years. Though maybe it's time he asked for a meeting. FD



Phosphorescent To Willie (Dead Oceans)

Each scene in The Band's concert doc *The Last Waltz* is filled with melancholy all tangled up in this infectious bleary-eyed love, like every second the musicians are on stage exists to squeeze out the maximum amount of familial warmth. *To Willie*, Phosphorescent's all-Willie Nelson covers album is like that, except I imagine much less cocaine was involved. I'm not going to lie and say that this project is anything but a collection of sentimental bummers accented by Matthew Houck's worn and cracked voice, but there is totally a time for that kind of thing, and that time is any month that is not June, July or August. SHS



Handsome Furs Face Control (Sub Pop)

Here's to things getting better. I forgot *Plague Park*, Dan Boeckner's first album, just like I forgot everything from Ms. King's pre-calculus class, but their



MSTRKRFT *Fist of God* (Dim Mak)

There is a scene in *The Wrestler*, my favorite comedy of 2008, when Randy "The Ram" and Necro Butcher are in the locker room before their hardcore match. As they prepare to brutalize each other with staple guns and barbwire, Necro lets The Ram know that he's basically cool with whatever, just as long he doesn't have to do much running or anything. MSTRKRFT's *Fist of God* feels like it operates under a similar philosophy: any dancefloor trick goes, as long it comes via intense pummeling. The producer/DJ duo even manages to make John Legend sound slightly agro. But what this method really makes clear is that they totally blew it when they titled their NORE-assisted first single "Bounce," when it obviously should be called "All I Do is Party." ED

follow-up *Face Control* is a rarity in that it sees a band making good on the promise it didn't seem to have. Dan Boeckner's beefy delivery gives the songs a confidence that borders on arrogance, while Alexei Perry's electronic undercurrents spill real blood all over this hot crotch rock. I'm impressed. ED



Azita *How Will You* (Drag City)

About seventy-two million years ago (okay, the 1990s), Azita Youssefi was the jermy lead singer of Chicago razor chix Scissor Girls, who screamed awesomely while contorting her body to look somehow octagonal. At least that's how I remember it. We always remember our youth idols as more flexible than, perhaps, they were. Now that we have reached the Pleistocene, Azita has been making deceptively straightforward piano-songwriting albums, aiming fully towards modern rock Classic Songwriting in the tradition of Steely Dan and maybe Billy Joel. Azita's voice is milky and naturally guttural even as she slightly warbles around her notes, and though her songwriting is traditional, there is always something deeply, subtly weird about her albums in a way that makes them unique and pretty beyond what they strive for. JES

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