

## MUSIC

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### PLAYLIST



JAZZ

#### SNEAKING OUT AFTER...

Mark Lockett



Recorded in New York with Joel Frahm on sax and Orlando le Fleming on bass, Melbourne drummer Mark Lockett's fourth album features eight of his compositions. Despite time as a student of flamboyant NYC drummer Ari Hoenig, Lockett does not push his work to the

fore. This album showcases all members of the trio in lively and polished renditions of pieces that are at times complex, but never too heavy. Lockett displays a deft, but restrained command of the kit, giving Frahm and le Fleming plenty of space.

**Roger Mitchell**



RAP

#### INFINITY

Chance Waters



Set aside all preconceptions about hip-hop and rap: in the hands of 24-year-old Australian rapper Chance Waters, a genre associated with anger, misogyny, vulgarity and youth disaffection is transformed into an art form combining finely textured pop arrangements,

honeyed vocals and lyrics with more content than a newspaper. On an album bulging with treasures, picking a standout is hard, but the anguished coming-of-age story on *Wedding Ring* is particularly powerful. Waters' voice is hard to ignore.

**Graeme Hammond**



GUITAR

#### LATINO

Milos



His debut album, titled *The Guitar*, launched him internationally with rave reviews and frenzied buyer response. The equally impressive follow-up sees Milos plumbing the riches of Latin America. And what a treasury this finger-pickin'

instrumentalist performs with the subtlety, grace, flair and tonal colour with which he so emphatically imbued *The Guitar*. Milos' interpretation of these gems from the guitar's heartland deserve every aficionado's attention.

**Bob Crimeen**



INDIE FOLK

#### HANDS OF GLORY

Andrew Bird



In a curious move, American violinist and guitarist Andrew Bird follows his hour-long *Break It Yourself* album, only released in March, with a brief 35-minute reprise that seems to satisfy his desire to have the whole two-album package wrapped up in one calendar year.

It's a very appealing album, bathed in soft folk and country tones that will find a lot of favour with fans of Jim White, Bon Iver and Okkervil River. It's classy stuff: a brief affair, but a true delight.

**Graeme Hammond**



# SWEDES RING IN NEW YEAR

From bonnie Scotland, The Hives' frontman tries a deep-fried Mars bar, tells a Norwegian joke and prepares for a rockin' good time in Australia, writes **Sally Browne**

It's the middle of the night in Glasgow.

Howlin' Pelle Almqvist, lead singer of The Hives, self-proclaimed "best live band in the world", is sitting in a tour bus, watching the native wildlife outside.

The band has just played one of Glasgow's hottest clubs, and now he's observing rowdy locals lining up at a nightclub in the middle of winter, wearing not very much at all. It seems all the myths about Glasgow are true.

"There's a long line of Scots in the nightclub line, so it's pretty intense," he explains. "There's a lot of action, arguing, singing, being drunk. They wear very little clothing when they go out, even in winter."

Soon this Swedish band, who are used to icy climes, will be on

the other side of the world and experiencing very different temperatures indeed as The Hives hit the stage at the Tivoli in Brisbane on Wednesday.

That also means they will be spending New Year's Eve Down Under. This will be their third time in Australia for the big event.

For anyone of his generation, says 34-year-old Almqvist, the most memorable New Year's Eve would have to be the turn of the millennium. That was back in Sweden, before they were famous.

"I was at a friend's old summer house, and I was on the lake shooting fireworks and I was drunk," he recalls.

"The next day, I went to Stockholm to mix a few of the last songs from the *Veni Vidi Vicious* album. That was kind of when my new life as a rock star started

because, when that album came out, it became a really big hit. It was really like the dividing line between me as a school boy and me as a rock star."

The Hives never set out to be the best live band in the world. They just wanted to make good music – and party. That meant that, when they became popular, they had to deal with the awkward problem of wondering if they were actually any good.

"I dreamed of being in an awesome band but I never thought that it would mean that people understood that the band was awesome, because most awesome bands that I knew of, nobody knew how awesome they were.

"I always felt like the best music was misunderstood.

"In the beginning when we



were popular, I was always worried about: What are we? A popular band? Are we any good?

But then I just decided to be the exception to the rule."

This year has been a very good year for The Hives with the release of their fifth album, *Lex Hives*.

They also had fun surprising a fan who won a Facebook competition to identify the names of all the tracks on the album – they not only called her up, but spent a day or two with her in California. "It was really cool. She's one of our biggest fans."

Naturally, Almqvist is pretty happy about surviving the badly predicted end of the world.

"I love being alive and I love being alive in this world," he says.

"I think it's exciting every day, so I don't want it to end. And also I'm pretty agnostic.

"You live a better life if you believe that you die when you die.

"When you die, it's all just nothing

and I feel like if you think that way, you have a better chance of living each day to the fullest."

This deep-and-meaningful line of thought is interrupted because his brother, Nicholaus Arson, wants him to try a deep-fried Mars bar, a Scottish speciality.

Almqvist takes a sticky bite. The verdict?

"Well, it's great. I don't know, man," he mumbles. "It's so salty and sweet.

"We're programmed biologically to love that, so I kind of love it but it's also super disgusting and it sticks to your teeth."

Maybe the sensation helps you enjoy the next moment in life, after you've finished it.

"I only had one bite. If I did a further one and I was not obliterated drunk, I think it would be terrible.

I'm pretty glad I had it, though, because it's a legend.

"I feel like I'm giving you

good value in this interview."

When not on tour, the band still calls Sweden home. While he tried New York for a while, Almqvist moved back home with his Swedish girlfriend.

And why not? Sweden has always had a particularly strong music scene, from the likes of Abba to Icona Pop to Peter Bjorn and John.

So, do they have a friendly rivalry with Norway and Finland like Australia does with New Zealand?

"Norway mostly," Almqvist confesses. "Finland doesn't feel like competition. Musically, we don't have competition in Norway and Finland because we're better than both of them, but there is definitely a tradition of Swedes doing Norway jokes and Norwegians doing Sweden jokes, and they're the same jokes, just turned around."

So, give us a sample, Pelle.

"Why do Norwegians wear their pyjamas when they're riding motorcycles? Because they lie down in the curb."

For more amusing lines and tricks and scissor kicks, *The Hives* play the *Tivoli*, Brisbane, on Wednesday.

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