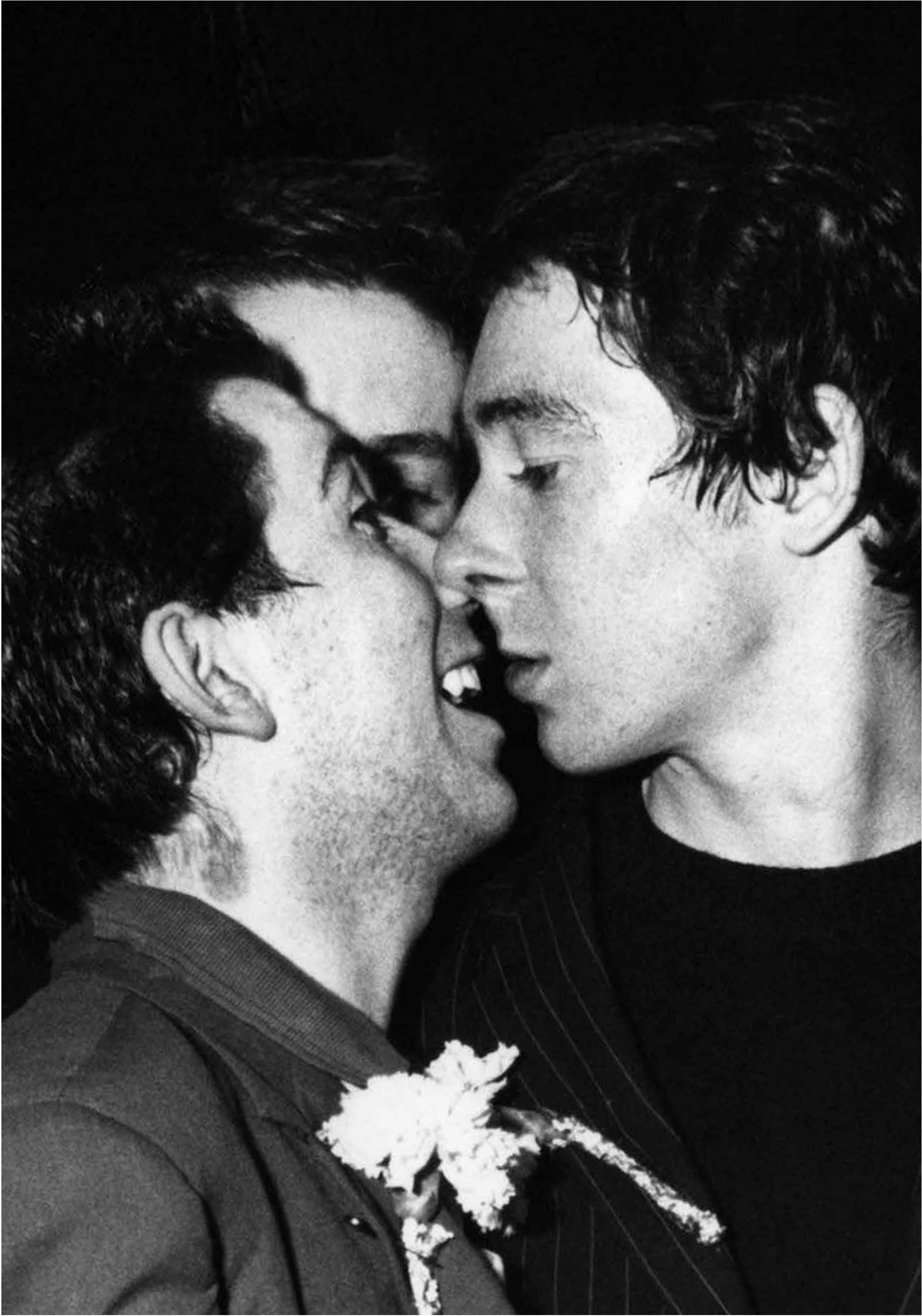


A VERY VERY MERRY TIME OF THE YEAR

THE BEST DAMN
RECORD CLUB

NOVEMBER 2025

|||VMP



BUZZCOCKS

COVER PHOTO BY ERICA ECHENBERG



THE BEST
DAMN COCKTAIL
||| VMP
NOVEMBER
GELLIVERSE FIZZY HAHA

The calendar says autumn is here, and party season is upon us. The Gelliverse Fizzy Haha captures the *Switcheroo* spirit—bright, fizzy, and a bit bonkers, like a disco ball exploding with primary colors. It’s a playful, visually striking drink with a balance of sweet, tart, and unexpected flavors, mirroring the album’s mix of campy fun and heartfelt moments. The fizz nods to the album’s effervescent energy, while a touch of bitters reflects its darker, introspective tracks like “Pluto is not a planet it’s a restaurant.”

Preparation	Ingredients
In a cocktail shaker filled with ice, combine gin, blue curaçao, lemon juice, simple syrup, and a dash of Angostura bitters.	1.5 oz gin HENDRICKS FOR A QUIRKY TWIST
Shake vigorously for 15 seconds to chill and blend the flavors.	0.75 oz blue curaçao
Strain into a chilled highball glass filled with ice.	0.5 oz fresh lemon juice
Top with sparkling wine for that fizzy, dancefloor-ready effervescence.	0.5 oz simple syrup
Sprinkle edible red glitter for a <i>Switcheroo-esque</i> sparkle.	1 dash Angostura bitters
Garnish with a lemon twist and drop in a gummy candy for a playful nod to the album’s whimsy.	2 oz sparkling wine
Serve with a colorful straw to sip while bouncing to “Bounce House.”	GARNISH Red edible glitter, to match the album’s bold aesthetic, and a lemon twist
	OPTIONAL A single gummy bear dropped in for a cheeky, childlike touch

GOBBLE GOBBLE HO—HO



tis the season...

As the crisp autumn air gives way to the twinkling lights and crackling fireplaces of the holiday season, we find ourselves once again reaching for the turntable. Not just for the familiar warble of a well-loved jazz standard, but to curate the perfect soundtrack for wrapping gifts, sipping spiced cider, and sharing stories with loved ones. There’s something profoundly magical about vinyl in December, isn’t there? The way a needle drops into those warm grooves, filling the room with sound that feels as tangible as the snowflakes outside your window. In a world of fleeting streams, records remind us to pause, to savor, to collect moments that last. And what better time to gift (or treat yourself to) the irreplaceable joy of a fresh spin?

This month, our pages are bursting with recommendations for stocking

stuffers that spin tales of rebellion, introspection, and unbridled energy, because holidays aren’t just for carols; they’re for rediscovering the albums that shaped us. But let’s cut straight to the wax that’s got us buzzing here at VMP: two exclusives that are pure, unadulterated gold for your shelf.

First, a massive shout-out to the incomparable Gelli Haha and her latest drop with Vinyl Me Please. Switcheroo has been pressed on signature VMP “Piss Yellow”. Gelli’s voice, layered over synths that hum like distant stars, captures the quiet wonder of the season while pulling you into a vortex of experimental bliss. If you’ve ever lost yourself staring at holiday lights and wondered what alternate universe they might unlock, this is your portal. Members are snapping these up faster

than mulled wine at a yuletide party, so you’re not alone in hoping Gelli comes to town.

And speaking of rituals, can we talk about the Buzzcocks’ Flat-Pack Philosophy reissue? This new exclusive pressing on limited-edition burgundy vinyl is a holiday miracle for punk purists and grunge ghosts alike. Originally unleashed in 2006, it’s a masterclass in melodic mayhem, but let’s lean into the lineage that makes it timeless: Pete Shelley, the wiry genius behind those hooks, was Kurt Cobain’s North Star. Cobain himself name-checked the Buzzcocks as a blueprint for Nirvana’s raw emotional punch. Think the urgent riffage of “Ever Fallen in Love” echoing in “Lithium’s” underbelly. Shelley’s knack for wrapping heartache in pop sheen? It’s the very DNA of

alternative rock’s soul. Spinning this during your holiday gatherings isn’t just listening; it’s a bridge across generations, a reminder that the best gifts keep on giving, from Manchester’s late ‘70s dives to Seattle’s foggy ‘90s haze. Grab it before it flat-packs its way out of stock.

As we hurtle toward the solstice, may your turntables stay warm, your needles sharp, and your collections ever-growing. Here’s to records that wrap us in nostalgia, surprise us with discovery, and remind us why we chase that first-play thrill. Drop us a line (or a photo of your holiday haul) on the gram, we’re all in this groove together.

With analog love and seasonal spins,

Mike
Erin Mulhane

TEXT “VMP” TO GET STARTED

(314) 300-9979

LABEL

CHERRY RED

OG RELEASE

2006

RELEASE TYPE

20TH ANNIVERSARY
VMP EXCLUSIVE

FORMAT

1 LP

SPEED

33 1/3 RPM

VINYL SIZE

12 INCH

WEIGHT

180 GRAM

COLORWAYS

BURGUNDY 318706

JACKET

GATEFOLD;
SINGLE POCKET

EXCLUSIVE
BONUS TRACKS

DON'T MATTER WHAT YOU SAY
SEE THROUGH YOU

MASTERED BY

SCOTT HULL
@MASTERDISK

FLAT-PACK PHILOSOPHY

BUZZCOCKS

THE BEST
DAMN RECORD

III VMP

NOVEMBER

flat-pack philosophy

BUZZCOCKS

日本語
必要な時にご覧頂けるよう
この情報を保管しておいて
下さい。

the best damn record in november 2025...

The Buzzcocks did not just play punk. They bootstrapped it. Born in the gray factories of '70s Manchester, they were the antidote to London's sneering elite. While the Sex Pistols spat chaos from safety-pinned stages, Pete Shelley, Steve Diggle, and crew invited the Pistols up north for two infamous gigs in '76 that lit the fuse on the whole scene. Broke and label-less, they scraped together £500 to self-release *Spiral Scratch* in '77. The world's first indie punk EP, pressed at a local factory with zero corporate strings. No A&R suits, no radio play, just word-of-mouth buzz in sweaty clubs and fanzines. They found their audience the hard way: gigging relentlessly, hawking singles at shows, turning outsiders into believers with hooks that hit like Cupid's arrow dipped in amphetamine. That blueprint of melodic mayhem without the majors paved the way for indie empires like Rough Trade and Stiff Records. It proved punk was not a fad but a fucking philosophy.

Fast-forward to 2006, and Flat-Pack Philosophy proves the Buzzcocks never lost the plot. Their eighth studio shot, it is 14 tracks of wiry riffs, Shelley and Diggle trading verses like old sparring partners, all wrapped in that signature buzzsaw pop. Opener "Flat-Pack Philosophy" skewers IKEA drudgery with a three-chord rumba that is equal parts hilarious and heartbreaking, while "What Am I Supposed to Do" channels hard-luck romance into a chorus you will scream along to on your third pint. Diggle's "Sound of a Gun" adds grit, but it is the Shelley-led gems like "Between Heaven and Hell" and "God, What Have I Done" that soar. Youthful exuberance laced with 50-something wisdom, proving punk ages like fine whiskey, not milk. Pitchfork called it a masterclass in "effortless hooks and hard-luck romanticism," PopMatters hailed its "raw power," and even skeptics admitted it is the band's best post-reunion blast. On X and Reddit's r/punk, fans are geeking over its timeless snark, with threads dissecting how it bridges '77 snottiness to 21st-century malaise.

What elevates this VMP pressing to holy grail status? It is remastered for vinyl with surgical precision, letting every snare crack and guitar buzz pop without the digital sheen. Those extremes in highs and lows (Think piercing Shelley yelps meeting thunderous bass) are preserved raw, no dulling the edges for easy cuts. The burgundy vinyl, limited to a hush-hush run, lets you peer right through to the grooves, a nod to the transparency of their DIY ethos. Hear the warmth in "Soul Survivor's" minute-fifty sprint, the way it feels like the band's in your living room, amps humming off the walls. Two bonus tracks were also selected as the true standouts from the era.

And the influence? It is generational dynamite. The Buzzcocks did not just spark Manchester's scene (hello, Joy Division, The Fall). They wired the DNA of alt-rock's underbelly. Kurt Cobain worshipped them. He name-dropped Singles Going Steady as Nirvana's emotional blueprint, those urgent hooks echoing in "Lithium" and "About a Girl." From R.E.M.'s jangly introspection to Green Day's pop-punk anthems, U2's arena-sized yearning, and even Pearl Jam's raw confessionals, Shelley's knack for wrapping heartache in earworm sheen ripples everywhere. Cobain kept their posters up, jammed their riffs in Seattle basements. It is no coincidence Flat-Pack arrived while Nirvana's legacy was still raw. In a scene bloated with trust-fund scenesters, this album reminds us punk's power was always self-made. Find your crowd, press your truth, let the hooks do the preaching.

Buzzcocks gigs still draw diehards and disciples, from sold-out UK dives to festival slots where kids half their age mosh to "Ever Fallen in Love." Collectors, you know the drill: VMP exclusives for legacy acts like this vanish like bootleg EPs at a '77 matinee, fetching flipside premiums as the vinyl revival heats up. The analog soul of Flat-Pack Philosophy and its flawed, furious textures screams for the turntable, whether you are cranking "Keep on Believing" at a house party or nursing a hangover with "Credit."

In a world of algorithm-approved slop, Flat-Pack Philosophy is a middle finger and a mixtape, and VMP's burgundy vinyl reissue with its sticker swagger turns it into crate-digger catnip. Do not sleep. Grab it before the hype (or the next Cobain doc) sends prices packing. Your spindle and your punk pedigree demand it.

This record pushes the boundaries of punk sonics, with razor-sharp highs in those gang vocals and bone-rattling lows in the rhythm section that could chew through lesser lathes. Most cutters would tame the treble and thin the bass for a safer groove, but we have gone all-in to keep the Buzzcocks' bite intact.

659024

NEBRASKA BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN



40TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

October 2022
180g Black Smoke vinyl
Half-speed mastered by
Barry Grint at AIR
AAA from the original
bedroom tapes

WHY WE PRESSED IT

Forty-three years ago Bruce Springsteen did the unthinkable: he walked away from the E Street Band, locked himself in a Colts Neck bedroom, and recorded ten songs straight to a Tascam Portastudio. No overdubs, no safety net, just a guitar, a harmonica, and the kind of silence that screams. The label begged for a full-band redo. Bruce mailed them the cassette anyway. Nebraska arrived on September 30, 1982, went gold, and changed the rules forever.

Three years ago we gave that cassette the treatment it always deserved. Barry Grint cut lacquers at half-speed, direct from the plangent-processed bedroom masters. The result is the quietest, widest, most three-dimensional Nebraska you'll ever hear. Drop the needle on "Atlantic City" and the mandolin floats left, Bruce's reverb drifts right, and the kick on "Open All Night" finally thumps like a Jersey heart at 3 a.m. Tape hiss? Still there... velvet fog, not gravel.

THE PACKAGE

180g Black Smoke vinyl
Tip-on gatefold with matte finish and spot gloss
12" art print by Justin A. McHugh: a lone highway vanishing into ink-black night
8-page listening-notes booklet by Peter Ames Carlin (the guy who wrote Bruce)
Hype sticker that still makes us grin

SIDE A

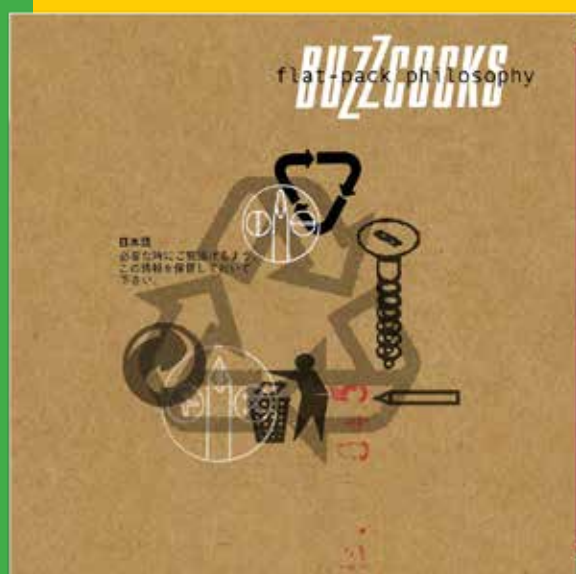
Nebraska
Atlantic City
Mansion on the Hill
Johnny 99
Highway Patrolman

SIDE B

State Trooper
Used Cars
Open All Night
My Father's House
Reason to Believe

THE BEST DAMN RECORD NOVEMBER

VMP



318706
FLAT-PACK PHILOSOPHY (20TH ANNIVERSARY)
BUZZCOCKS
180G BURGUNDY



195684
PALIMPSA
MAL DEVISA
"HAND OF THE SUN" 2XLP
100 AVAILABLE

"FIRST LOOK" NOVEMBER

VMP

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535512
WHERE YOU WANT TO BE
TAKING BACK SUNDAY



730346
SILVERBULLETS
SILVERTONES



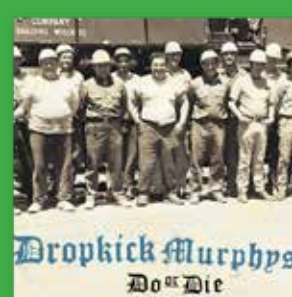
394484
REJUVENATION
THE METERS



191655
NOW
ARETHA FRANKLIN



596053
PSYCHIC SPASMS
NEON INDIAN



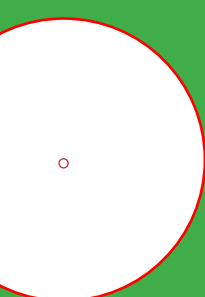
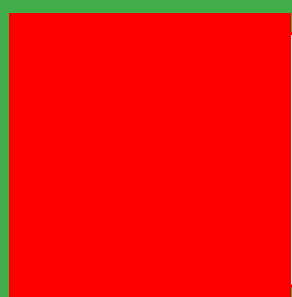
564404
DO OR DIE
DROPKICK MURPHYS



603832
WALK RIGHT IN
GUS CANNON



485763
EL MALO
WILLIE COLON



999999
BANK
CREDIT



659024
NEBRASKA
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN -



459802
MAJOR ARCANA
SPEEDY ORTIZ



482913
ADVENTURES IN FOAM
CUJO



697153
THE PREFACE
ELZHI



918653
SALT OF THE EARTH
THE SOUL SEARCHERS



327145
PRINCESS FOREVER
DREAMER ISIOMA



713829
GHOST SONG
CÉCILE MCLORIN SALVANT



546072
AGE OF ADZ
SUFJAN STEVENS



382951
SPARK
WHITNEY



809364
LAST SPA ON EARTH
DIVINO NIÑO



127590
SUPERSTAR
CAROLINE ROSE



780469
U.F.O.
JIM SULLIVAN



328459
SLIME PATROL
KHADIJA AL HANAFI



903681
TENNESSEE WOMAN
CHARLES MUSSELWHITE BLUES
BAND



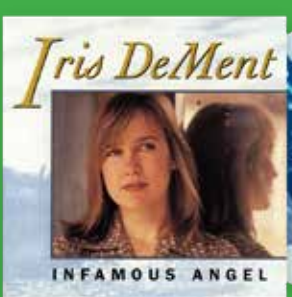
481297
SUN SHIP
JOHN COLTRANE



970216
BELLA DONNA
STEVIE NICKS



564903
SORRY I HAVEN'T CALLED
VAGABON



309675
INFAMOUS ANGEL
IRIS DEMENT



831467
SICK!
EARL SWEATSHIRT



120736
HER FAVORITE COLO(U)R
BLU



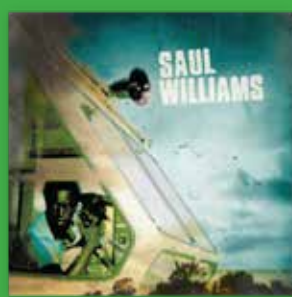
584120
FOLKSINGER
DAVE VAN RONK



649318
...INTO A REAL THING
DAVID PORTER



752069
BLOSSOM DEARIE
BLOSSOM DEARIE



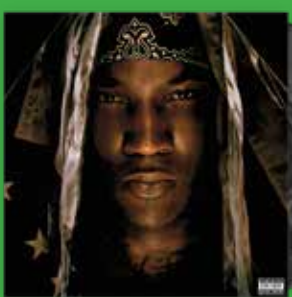
489051
SAUL WILLIAMS
SAUL WILLIAMS



559047
BULL!
VELVET NEGRONI



894277
GOTHIC LUXURY
MEECHY DARKO



263594
THE RECESSION
YOUNG JEEZY



152336
LEROY WALKS!
LEROY VINNEGAR SEXTET



300477
SLOW DRAG
DONALD BYRD



748120
HONKY TONK HEROES
WAYLON JENNINGS



518942
WILLIE NELSON & FAMILY
WILLIE NELSON



263663
SATURDAY NIGHT
CARRTOONS



931348
LIVE FROM BLACKALACHIA
MOSES SUMNEY



416776
WILLY AND THE POOR BOYS
CCR



783635
FOR THOSE IN LOVE
DINAH WASHINGTON



606053
BLUE SUEDE SHOES
CARL PERKINS



625087
LOOSE FUTURE
COURTNEY MARIE ANDREWS



268934
REVOLUTION
MIRANDA LAMBERT

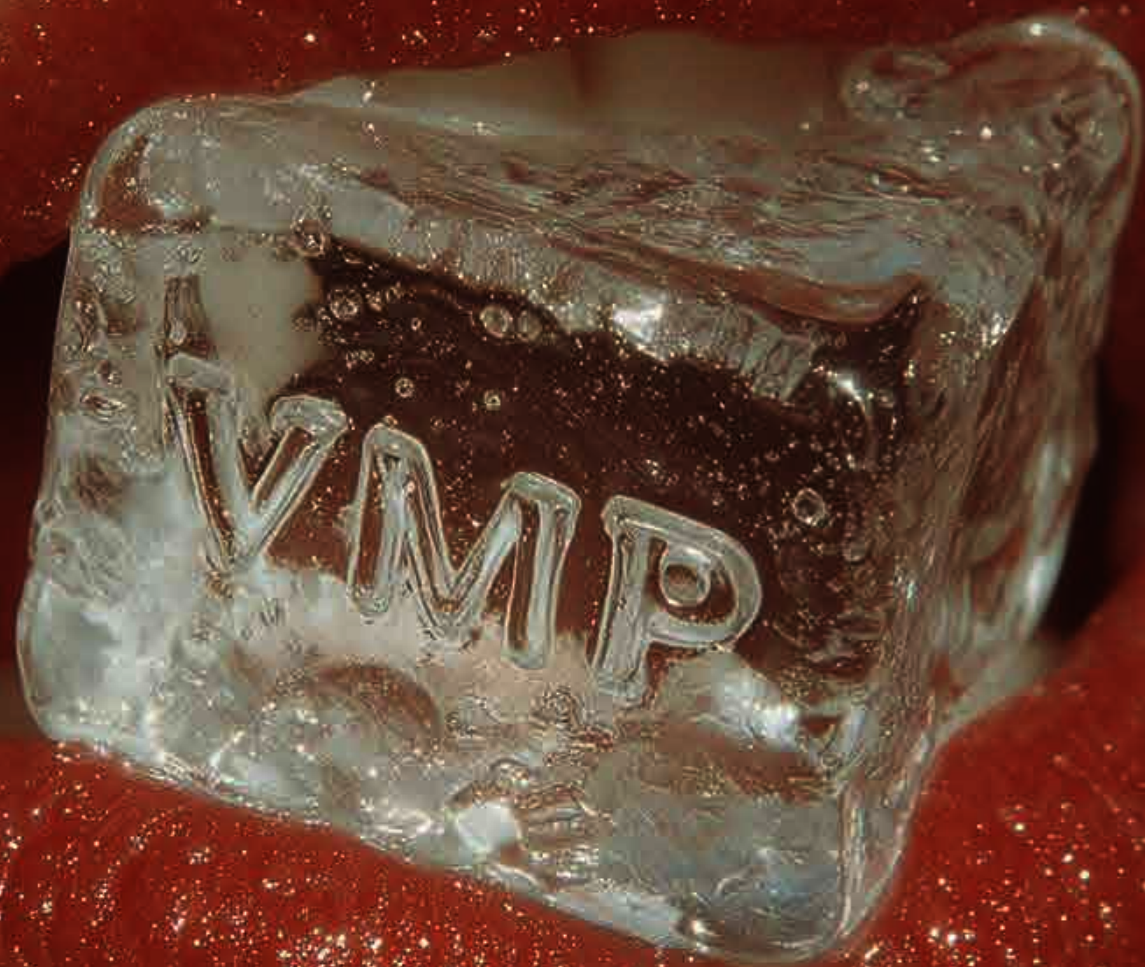


391572
JUST BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN
DOLLY PARTON

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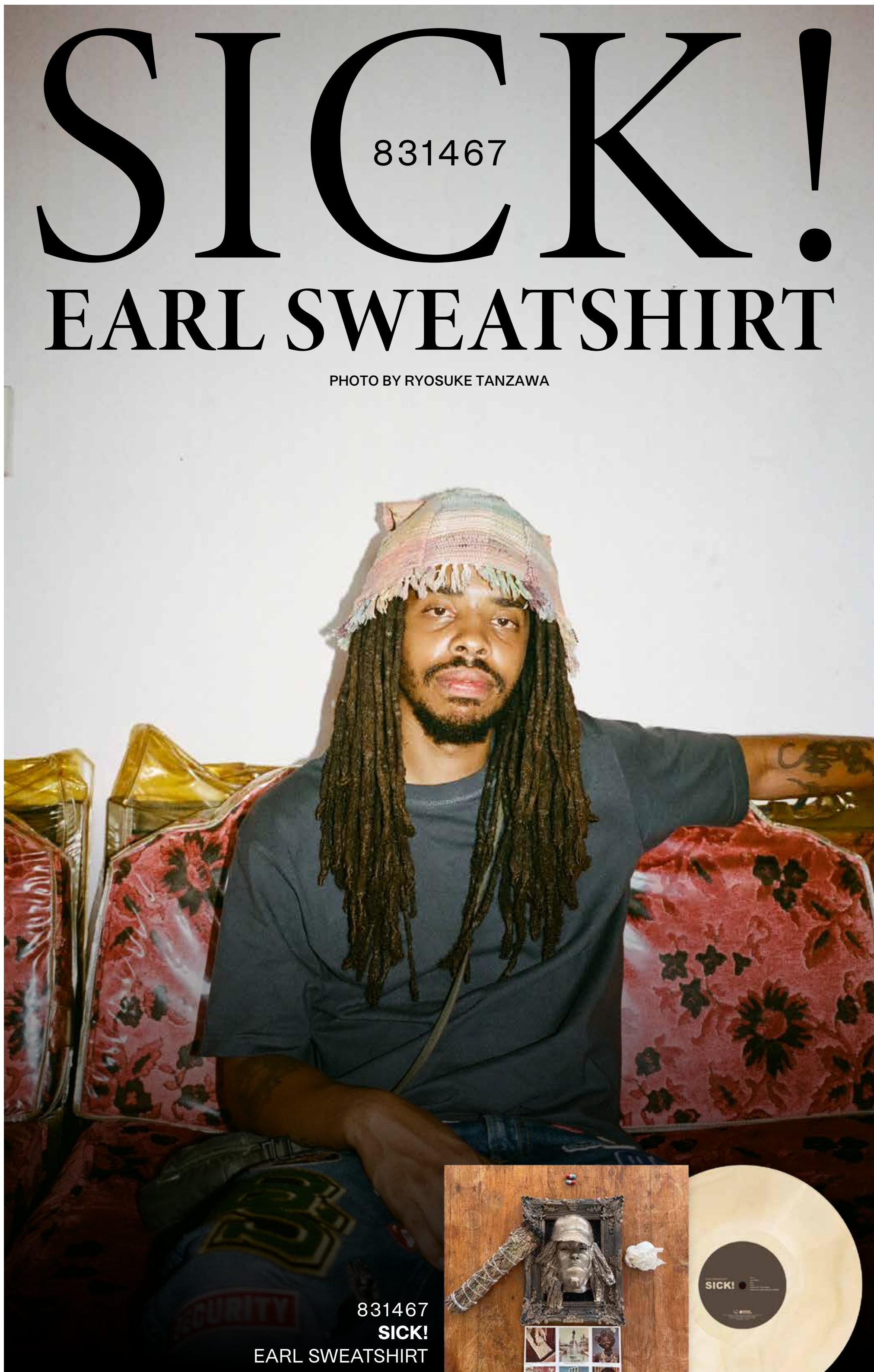
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 676997 SWITCHEROO GELLI HABA	 684760 SUNFADED GUNNAR	 098674 KAMAAL THE ABSTRACT Q-TIP	 278299 THE DIARY J DILLA
 516189 VECKATIMEST GRIZZLY BEAR	 132194 CELEBRATION ROCK JAPANDROIDS	 365525 THE LEMON OF PINK THE BOOKS	 986241 IT'S DARK AND HELL IS HOT DMX
 189308 WE ARE BEAUTIFUL LOS CAMPENSINOS!	 201869 SEXTANT HERBIE HANCOCK	 823328 JAILBREAK THIN LIZZY	 447465 PHASES & STAGES WILLIE NELSON
 959163 THE CENTER WON'T HOLD SLEATER-KINNEY	 058997 I'M WIDE AWAKE, IT'S MORNING BRIGHT EYES	 634285 COAT OF MANY COLORS DOLLY PARTON	 337776 VICTIM OF LOVE CHARLES BRADLEY
 143066 OCEAN FRONT PROPERTY GEORGE STRAIT	 630431 FOR MY BROKEN HEART REBA MCENTIRE	 829325 THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF LORD QUAS QUASIMOTO	 981994 GENOCIDE & JUICE THE COUP
 050902 BITTE ORCA DIRTY PROJECTORS	 455091 THE HISSING OF SUMMER LAWNS JONI MITCHELL	 580011 BACK TO BACK THE MAR-KEYS/BOOKER T & THE MG'S	 445231 THE SHAPE OF JAZZ TO COME ORNETTE COLEMAN
 327031 PUSSY CATS HARRY NILSSON	 875162 THE HALL OF GAME E40	 558949 LEA IN LOVE BARBARA LEA	 501416 TALKING TO THE PEOPLE BLACK NASTY
 660553 SINGIN' SOME SOUL JOE BATAAN	 225889 HOOTENANNY THE REPLACEMENTS	 970032 STAR PEOPLE MILES DAVIS	 805421 ETERNITY ALICE COLTRANE



We're always on the hunt for albums that redefine the boundaries of hip-hop, blending introspection with innovative production in ways that demand repeated listens. Few artists embody this ethos quite like Earl Sweatshirt, whose 2022 release *SICK!* stands as a testament to his evolution as a rapper and storyteller. Released in the shadow of a global pandemic, this compact yet profound project captures the chaos, resilience, and quiet revelations of a world turned upside down. And now, with our exclusive VMP edition on stunning "Tabula Rasa" cream vinyl, it's the perfect time to dive back in—or discover it for the first time—through the warm, analog embrace of a turntable.

SICK! clocks in at just under 25 minutes, but don't let its brevity fool you; this is Earl at his most distilled and potent. Emerging from a period of isolation and reflection, the album feels like a stream-of-consciousness dispatch from the front lines of personal and societal

upheaval. Tracks like "2010" kick things off with a hazy, looping beat that perfectly underscores Earl's razor-sharp bars about growth, loss, and the weight of legacy. His delivery is clearer than ever, shedding some of the abstract murkiness of earlier works like *Some Rap Songs* while retaining that signature poetic density. It's as if the pandemic forced him to strip away the excess, leaving behind gems that gleam with raw honesty.

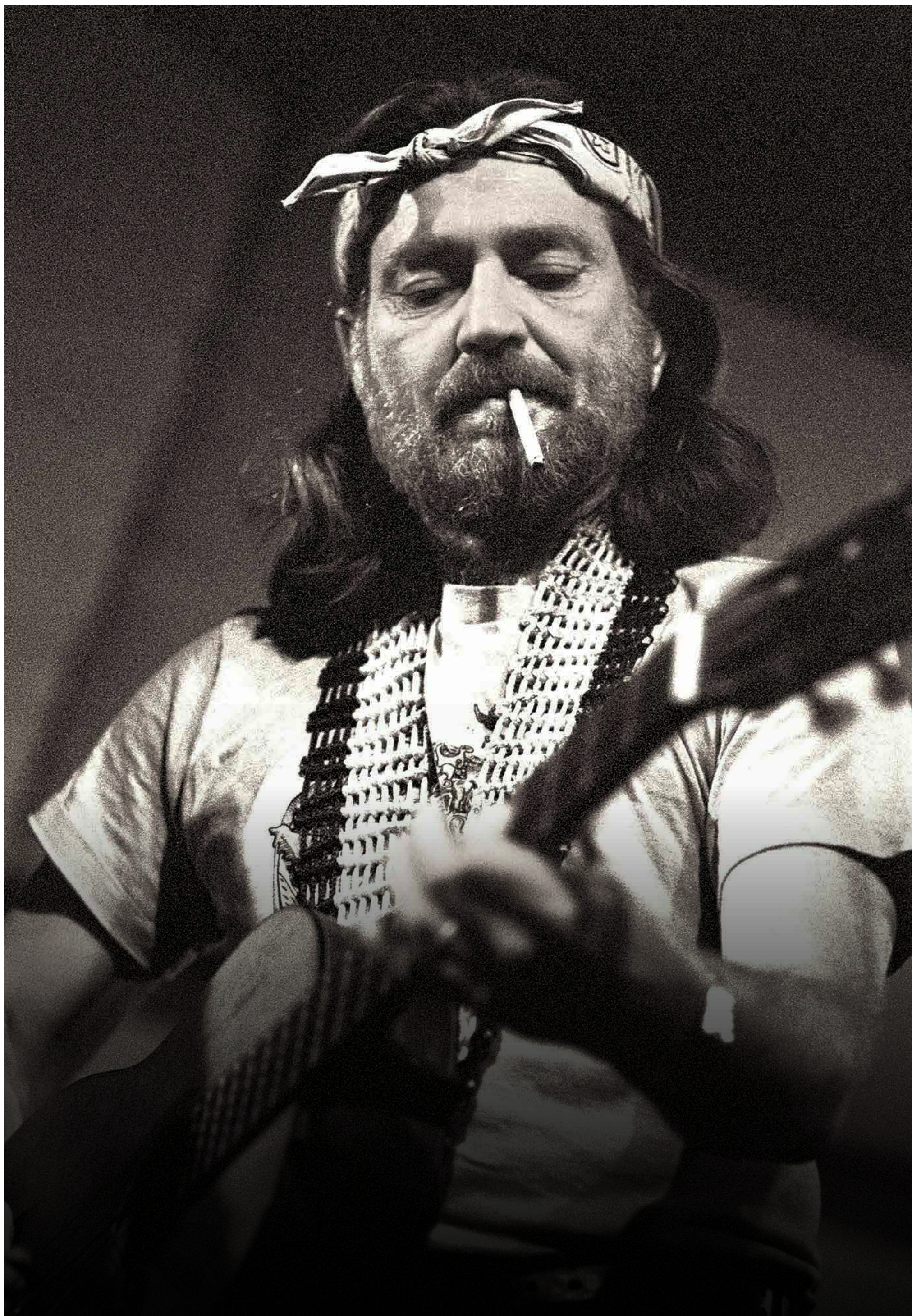
What makes *SICK!* so compelling is its seamless fusion of melancholy and triumph. On "Lye," produced by Black Noi\$e, Earl weaves tales of survival over a soulful, warped sample that evokes the disorientation of lockdown life. Lines like "I been sick, I been tired / But I'm built for the fire" hit with a visceral punch, resonating with anyone who's navigated uncertainty. The album's production palette—courtesy of collaborators like The Alchemist, Navy Blue, and Earl himself under his randomblackdude alias—is a masterclass in subtlety. Beats simmer rather than explode, allowing Earl's

wordplay to take center stage. "God Laughs" brings a meditative vibe with its jazzy undertones, while "Fire in the Hole" closes the record on a note of defiant optimism, Earl's flow riding a gritty loop like a wave cresting toward resolution.

Critics have hailed *SICK!* as one of Earl's most artistically rewarding efforts to date. Rolling Stone praised it for "wrecking rap's rules," highlighting how Earl pushes himself into new territories without losing his core identity. Pitchfork noted the "thoughtful and tightly coiled" raps that shine brighter than ever, and Beats Per Minute called it a "pure rap album" where "the bars slap" relentlessly. Even in fan discussions on platforms like Reddit, tracks like "Lye," "2010," and "Fire in the Hole" are frequently cited as standouts, with listeners appreciating the album's fragmented yet polished feel—a deliberate nod to the disjointed times it was born from.

For vinyl enthusiasts, our VMP pressing elevates the experience to new heights. Pressed on limited-edition cream vinyl in a gatefold sleeve with an obi-strip, it's a collector's dream that captures the album's thematic "tabula rasa" (clean slate) ethos. The sound quality is impeccable, with the subtle nuances of the production—those crackling samples and layered vocals—coming alive in a way digital streams simply can't replicate. Spinning *SICK!* on vinyl feels intimate, like Earl is right there in the room, sharing his vulnerabilities over a late-night session.

In a discography filled with highlights, *SICK!* solidifies Earl Sweatshirt's place as one of hip-hop's most introspective voices. It's an album that rewards patience, revealing new layers with each play. Whether you're a longtime fan or new to his world, this VMP edition is an essential addition to any collection. Grab it while you can—because great art like this doesn't stay under the radar for long.



We cherish albums that capture the essence of American roots music, blending heartfelt storytelling with authentic country soul. Willie Nelson's 1971 release *Willie Nelson & Family* is a cornerstone of his early catalog, showcasing the outlaw icon's raw talent and familial warmth long before he became a household name. This understated gem, born from Nelson's transition to creative freedom, reflects themes of love, loss, and redemption. Our exclusive VMP edition on AAA 180g "Campfire Quad" colored vinyl brings this classic to life with pristine sound, inviting fans to rediscover its enduring appeal around the turntable.

Clocking in at a concise 30 minutes, *Willie Nelson & Family* feels like an intimate gathering, with Nelson's signature nasal twang and fingerpicked guitar leading the way. Opening with the tender "I Can Cry Again," the album weaves through originals and covers, highlighting Nelson's knack for infusing emotion into every note. Standouts like the poignant "Kneel at the Feet of Jesus" and the upbeat "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down" (a Kris Kristofferson cover) demonstrate his interpretive prowess, while "Family Bible" nods to gospel roots with harmonious family backing. Produced during Nelson's RCA era, the record's simple arrangements—acoustic guitars, piano, and subtle steel—create a cozy, fireside vibe that foreshadows his later masterpieces.

Critics and fans alike celebrate Willie Nelson & Family for its authenticity. Rolling Stone has called it a pivotal step in Nelson's evolution, praising his "poignant songwriting" that blends country tradition with personal introspection. AllMusic notes its "warm, inviting" quality, ideal for vinyl playback, while listener reviews on Rate Your Music highlight the "good country sound" and memorable moments that reward repeated spins. Even in retrospect, it's seen as a bridge to Nelson's outlaw era, influencing generations of Americana artists.

Our VMP pressing elevates this experience with "Campfire Quad" vinyl in a gatefold sleeve, complete with a Listening Notes booklet for deeper insights. The AAA mastering ensures every nuance—from Nelson's gentle strums to the harmonious choruses—shines through, far surpassing any digital format. Spinning it feels like joining the Nelson family circle, evoking simpler times.

In Willie Nelson's vast discography, *Willie Nelson & Family* remains a heartfelt treasure. It rewards patient listeners with layers of sincerity and soul. Whether you're a die-hard fan or exploring his roots, this VMP edition is a must-have—secure yours before it's gone.



518942
WILLIE NELSON & FAMILY
WILLIE NELSON

PHOTO BY
STEPHANIE CHERNIKOWSKI



WORDS BY ELARA & ILLUSTRATION BY @AMUSEDMARIO

I'm writing this the morning after Halloween, the radiator clanking like it's impatient for snow. My apartment still smells of pumpkin spice and the fog machine the barista downstairs swore would "elevate the vibe." Outside, the rain is doing its Portland thing—relentless, soft, the kind that makes you forget the sun exists. Christmas is still eight weeks away, but for me the season started last night when Mom texted: *Day-after-Halloween tradition? I'll bring the ugly sweater and the spritz dough.*

That's our deal. November 1, we skip the calendar and jump straight from jack-o'-lanterns to jingle bells. No turkey, no sales, just us and whatever record I've been saving like a secret.

This year it's A Very She & Him Christmas, the red-and-green splatter Vinyl Me, Please slipped into my mailbox yesterday. I carried it upstairs past the espresso fumes and the neighbor's cat who thinks my doorstep is his throne. I opened it on the rug where Dad used to read me *The Polar Express* before he packed a suitcase and a promise he never kept. The vinyl slid out warm: crimson bleeding into emerald, flecks of color like the ornaments Mom still hangs one by

one, telling me which cousin snapped the neck off the glass reindeer the year I turned ten. I set it on my cherry-red Technics, the same one Dad bought at a garage sale when I was nine, and dropped the needle.

"The Christmas Waltz" curled around the room like steam from the kettle I'd just clicked off. Zooey's voice is clear, a little shaky, like she'd been crying too, wrapped around me. M. Ward's guitar answered, patient and low. I closed my eyes and saw her in Elf, all wide-eyed and singing "Baby, It's Cold Outside" in that shower scene, the one Dad rewound three times because he said her laugh sounded like Christmas morning. I was eight when that movie came out, and every December after, Dad made cocoa with too many marshmallows and queued it up. Zooey became our holiday constant... her bangs, her cardigans, her voice that could make even a department-store Santa feel real.

I grew up with her. She was Jovie in the living room, then Trillian on late-night cable, then the girl with the ukulele on YouTube covers that got me through high-school heartbreaks. By the time A Very She & Him Christmas dropped in 2011, I was nineteen and Dad was

already gone, but I bought the CD anyway and played it on repeat in my dorm until the disc scratched. Zooey had become Christmas itself, quirky, warm, a little melancholy under the tinsel. She wasn't trying to be perfect; she was just there, like the smell of pine needles or the flicker of a string of lights that's one bulb short.

Now, at twenty-seven, I have her on vinyl. Red-and-green splatter, VMP's holiday select. The splatter spins beneath the stylus, casting festive shadows across the ceiling, and suddenly the tree I haven't dragged out of the closet yet doesn't feel so far away. I played the whole side twice before Mom arrived. She showed up at noon with a tin of half-baked dough and that sweater. The one with a reindeer with one eye missing, the one Dad swore made her look like a deranged elf. We shoved the futon against the wall, lit every tea light I own, and queued the record again.

"Sleigh Ride" made us laugh, remembering Dad dragging me down the hallway on a blanket while Mom yelled about the floors. "Blue Christmas" made us quiet; Mom's hand found mine without looking. Zooey sang like she'd watched her own father

walk out the door, like she knew the holidays could hold joy and ache in the same breath. The red-and-green streaks became our private holiday lights, eight weeks early and exactly on time.

We didn't talk about Dad. We didn't need to. The music said it all. Some years are cracked, but the grooves still play.

Zooey Deschanel is iconic now. Elf on every screen, this album on every turntable worth its dustcover. If your own holidays carry ghosts, if the tree feels too tall or the lights too bright, if Dad's empty chair still catches the glow. Text your vinyl dealer at (314) 300-9979 and grab a red-and-green splatter edition before it's gone. Play it the night you finally drag the boxes down from the attic. Play it loud enough to drown the silence, soft enough to hear the ones you love breathing beside you, and to hear Dad humming off-key in the back of your mind.

I'll be here every November 1, needle ready, waiting for Mom to ring the bell with dough on her fingers and that sweater on her back. The tree will stay in its box until December, but Zooey's already singing. And for the first time in fifteen years, the holidays feel like they're starting exactly when they should.

VMP PRESENTS

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SHARON JONES & THE DAP-KINGS

deck your turntables and trim the wax...

As the snowflakes start swirling and your turntable begs for some seasonal sparkle, why not sleigh your holiday playlist by adding a festive album to your next VMP order? It's the perfect way to unwrap extra joy without leaving your cozy couch—think of it as Santa's little helper for your record collection.

We've curated a merry mix of holiday classics that'll have you grooving under the mistletoe. For soul-stirring vibes, spin The Soulful Strings - The Magic of Christmas and let those strings pull at your heartstrings like tinsel on a tree. Craving comedy with your cocoa? Adam Sandler - Eight Crazy Nights (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack) is your ticket to Hanukkah hilarity—because who says vinyl can't be a total mensch?

If indie charm is your jam, She & Him, A Very She & Him Christmas delivers

Zooey Deschanel and M. Ward's retro-cool carols, while Bright Eyes - A Christmas Album adds a poignant indie edge to your eggnog evenings. Dive into retro rhythms with Various Artists - Soul Christmas or get the party pumping with Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings - It's a Holiday Soul Party—guaranteed to make your socks rock off!

Jazz lovers, rejoice: The Ramsey Lewis Trio - More Sounds of Christmas swings with piano prowess, and the queen herself, Ella Fitzgerald - Ella Wishes You a Swinging Christmas, will have you scat-singing along like it's 1959 all over again.

Text "VMP" to (314)300-9979 to "add" one (or more!) of these merry masterpieces to your next shipment. Your holidays just got a whole lot groovier. Merry spinning, and may your records be bright!



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