

NEW YORK MUSIC DAILY

Global Music With a New York Edge

The 100 Best Songs of 2012

by delarue

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Was this the best year ever for music, or what? There could have been 500 songs on this list and they'd all be amazing. In order to give credit where credit is due, it became necessary to pare this down to just one track per artist.

Bookmark this page and visit often. Virtually every link here will take you to a stream or download of each song. Where this year's [50 Best Albums](http://newyorkmusicdaily.wordpress.com/2012/12/26/50bestalbums2012/) (newyorkmusicdaily.wordpress.com/2012/12/26/50bestalbums2012/) page was all about rock, this page offers a chance to explore some of the best acts outside of the rock world. While these days, an "official release" tends to be the day someone uploads the song to youtube, there are a handful of tracks here which are so new that they haven't made it to the web yet.

Outside of the top ten here, this list is in completely random order: trying to rank a jangly rock song against a lushly orchestrated Middle Eastern anthem, a bittersweet honkytonk song or a Serbian brass jam is absurd. So don't think any less of the tracks at the bottom of the list: they're all good. Rachele Garniez, who happened to land on #99, is every bit as fun as Julia Haltigan at #9, or Lorraine Leckie at #19.

For the first time ever, this year's top spots on the lists of [best New York concerts](http://newyorkmusicdaily.wordpress.com/2012/12/27/concerts2012/) (<http://newyorkmusicdaily.wordpress.com/2012/12/27/concerts2012/>), [best albums](http://newyorkmusicdaily.wordpress.com/2012/12/26/50bestalbums2012/) (newyorkmusicdaily.wordpress.com/2012/12/26/50bestalbums2012/) and best songs were swept by a single group, Ulrich Ziegler. The noir guitar instrumental duo of Stephen Ulrich and Itamar Ziegler won for their debut album, their album release show at Barbes and for their song Ita Lia, a morbidly reverb-toned, icily chromatic Nino Rota-inspired theme which you can [play here](http://www.reverbnation.com/ulrichziegler#!/artist/artist_songs/2568164) (http://www.reverbnation.com/ulrichziegler#!/artist/artist_songs/2568164). For those who've followed Ulrich's career, that should come as no surprise, considering that his previous band [Big Lazy](http://www.myspace.com/biglazymusic) (<http://www.myspace.com/biglazymusic>) pretty much ruled the top ten, year after year, at this blog's predecessors on the web and in print.

2. Walter Ego – Sunday's Assassin. This is an LJ Murphy song that Walter Ego used to play bass on when the two were bandmates back in the 90s. Murphy long since dropped this from his set list, and that's too bad, because this casually lurid serial killer's tale is one of the best things he ever wrote. Thanks to Walter Ego for resurrecting it. [Watch the video](http://youtu.be/hGFaEC7MzZk) (<http://youtu.be/hGFaEC7MzZk>)

3. Mike Rimbaud – Idiot Wind. On one hand, to not put what could be the greatest rock lyric ever written in the top spot here is absurd, especially considering how Rimbaud reinvented it as straight-up, snarling rock. It's also very hard to find: if you have Spotify, it's [here](http://open.spotify.com/track/1mObhgri4PS9ubVexg1n) (<http://open.spotify.com/track/1mObhgri4PS9ubVexg1n>), otherwise here's a [sound snippet](http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/mikerimbaud8) (<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/mikerimbaud8>).

4. Chris Erikson – Ear to the Ground

Best jangly rock song of the year comes from this popular lead guitarist, who finally put out a debut album, *Lost Track of the Time*, which includes this richly allusive, wickedly catchy track. He teases you with the hook and then makes you wait til the very end for the payoff. [Watch the video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHE2HHXU9R4) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHE2HHXU9R4>)

5. Saint Maybe – Everything That Rises

An epic masterpiece of volcanically guitar-fueled, psychedelic southwestern gothic rock from Patti Smith's guitarist and Bob Dylan's drummer. From their debut album *Things As The Are*. [Play the song](http://www.reverbnation.com/open_graph/song/12487891) (http://www.reverbnation.com/open_graph/song/12487891)

6. Hannah vs. the Many – Jordan Baker. Prettiest sad noir 60s pop song of the year: girl finally finds guy she actually likes...and then the apocalypse swirls in. From the amazing new album *All Our Heroes Drank Here*. [Play the song](http://hannahvsthemany.bandcamp.com/album/all-our-heroes-drank-here) (<http://hannahvsthemany.bandcamp.com/album/all-our-heroes-drank-here>)

7. The Sometime Boys – Good People of Brooklyn. Soaring lush acoustic chamber pop from this artsy Americana band. Frontwoman Sarah Mucho sings uneasily about her "city of trees," from the new album *Ice & Blood*. [Play the song](http://soundcloud.com/demonkittymusic/sets/ice-and-blood) (<http://soundcloud.com/demonkittymusic/sets/ice-and-blood>)

8. Jon DeRosa – Birds of Brooklyn. Metaphorically loaded noir 60s chamber pop at its most cinematic, old guy eyeing a girl he could never have as the strings swoon behind him. From his new *Wolf in Preacher's Clothes* album. [Play the song](http://soundcloud.com/jonderosa/jon-derosa-birds-of-brooklyn) (<http://soundcloud.com/jonderosa/jon-derosa-birds-of-brooklyn>)

9. Julia Haltigan – Over the Fields. Looks to be too new to make it to the web yet – over careening southwestern gothic backbeat rock, the New York chanteuse amps up the suspenseful brassiness. She slayed with this at Make Music NY this summer. [Stream some similar tracks](http://soundcloud.com/juliahaltigan) (<http://soundcloud.com/juliahaltigan>)

10. Changing Modes – Firewall. Nebulously narrative macabre chromatic Botanicaesque art-rock tune from this three-keyboard band's brilliant latest album *In Flight*. [Play the song](http://www.myspace.com/changingmodes/music/songs/firewall-87256640) (<http://www.myspace.com/changingmodes/music/songs/firewall-87256640>)

11. Alec K. Redfearn and the Eyesores – Fire Shuffle. This is the most swirlingly psychedelic of the many macabre gypsy-tinged tracks on the Rhode Island band's chilling latest album *Sister Death*. [Play the song](http://cuneiformrecords.bandcamp.com/album/sister-death) (<http://cuneiformrecords.bandcamp.com/album/sister-death>)

12. Chicha Libre – Papageno Electrico. Like Alec Redfearn above, the Brooklyn Peruvian surf rock band's latest album *Canibalismo* is loaded with trippy, creepy tracks and this is the creepiest, like a Japanese video game theme done as psychedelic cumbia. [Watch the video](http://vwww.youtube.com/watch?v=XqM0TY8_fwv) (http://vwww.youtube.com/watch?v=XqM0TY8_fwv)

13. Beninghove's Hangmen – Surf & Turf. New York's premier noir cinematic surf jazz monsters hit last year's list with their debut album. This is a new monster surf track that hasn't made it to the web, but you can catch them at Zirzamin on Mondays at 9 where they play it often. [Stream the first album](http://beninghoveshangmen.bandcamp.com) (<http://beninghoveshangmen.bandcamp.com>)

14. Daniel Kahn & the Painted Bird – Sunday After the War. Coldly wise, crushingly cynical klezmer-rock. "They're always recruiting, after the war." Kahn slayed with this at Lincoln Center Out of Doors this past summer. [Watch a video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fiDpd4lvVd4) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fiDpd4lvVd4>)

15. Emily Jane White – Clipped Wings. The murderess leaves a suicide note at the lake house and this is it: a great story and a chilling song. From her latest album *Ode to Sentience*. [Watch the video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_9Q5weKMIw) (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_9Q5weKMIw)

16. When the Broken Bow- Giving Up the Ship. Apocalyptic ukulele waltz with bloodcurdling screams at the end from this smart, raw, female-fronted Portland, Oregon art-rock crew. [Play the song](http://www.whenthebrokenbow.bandcamp.com) (<http://www.whenthebrokenbow.bandcamp.com>)

17. Lianne Smith- The Thief. Now co-leader of the Golden Palominos, Smith has been playing this gorgeous but chilling oldschool country smash for years and finally released it on her debut *Two Sides of a River*. Sing along: "I found out, yeah, I found out too late." [Play the song](http://www.liannsmith.bandcamp.com) (<http://www.liannsmith.bandcamp.com>)

18. Jan Bell – The Miner's Bride. One of the great voices in Americana music, Bell makes the connection between Appalachian music and the British folk songs it sprung from. This is a Karen Dahlstrom song about a mail-order bride going off to what looks like disappointment and early death in the old west, from Bell's new album *Dream of the*

Miner's Child. Play the song (<http://www.janbellmusic.com/music.html>)

19. Lorraine Leckie – The Everywhere Man. This party crusher has come to kill everything in his path: a wicked serial killer tale from Leckie's elegant new chamber pop collaboration with social critic/writer Anthony Haden-Guest, Rudely Interrupted. Play the song (<http://lorraineleckie.bandcamp.com/track/everywhere-man>)

20. The Japonize Elephants – Melodie Fantastique. Lush sweeping majestic circus rock doesn't get any more entertaining than this. Title track from the band's sensational new album. Play the song (<http://japonizeelephants.bandcamp.com>)

21. Mac McCarty – My Name Is Jack. Another song about a killer, and one that hasn't made it to the web yet, from one of the darkest voices in Americana. For awhile he had a monthly residency at Bar 82, where he would always play this, and he's got other videos (<http://vimeo.com/macmccartymusic>) you can watch.

22. Dimestore Dance Band – Wren Wren. Might as well go with two relatively brand-new ones, this being an urbane, wry gypsy-inflected number from guitar virtuoso Jack Martin and his bassist accomplice Jude Webre. The band is back together and playing this from time to time, and you can hear more of their stuff here. (<http://www.myspace.com/dimestoredanceband/>)

23. Jodi Shaw – The Witch. In the old days, dotty old women used to get burned. The Brooklyn pianist/songwriter works that metaphor for all it's worth in this chilling art-rock ballad. From her latest album In Waterland. Play the song (<http://jodishaw.bandcamp.com/track/the-witch>)

24. Choban ElektriK – Valle E Shquiperise Se Mesme. A classic Balkan folk song done as trippy psychedelic rock with funereal organ and searing violin, from the band's sensational 2012 debut album. Play the song (<http://www.reverbnation.com/chobanelektriK>)

25. Eilen Jewell – Warning Signs. Her 2012 album is called Queen of the Minor Key, which pretty much says it all: this is a killer backbeat noir Americana rock tune with cool baritone sax and reverb guitar. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qA75tOEI0OE>)

26. Kayhan Kalhor & Ali Bahrami Fard – Where Are You. Anguished alienation has never been more hauntingly restrained than it is on this epic instrumental from I Will Not Stand Alone, the transcendent new collaboration between the Iranian spiked fiddle and santoor virtuosos. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVeN6RolNoA>)

27. Damian Quinones y Su Conjunto – Barrio. This lead guitar-fueled epic from their brilliant 2012 album Gumball Ma-Jumbo is a throwback to the classic latin soul sound of the late 60s and early 70s, right down to the inspired, analog-sounding production. Play the song (<http://damianquinones.com/>)

28. Matt Keating – Punchline. Bouncy, metaphorically charged vintage soul-infused cynicism from Keating's characteristically literate, intense latest album Wrong Way Home. Play the song (<http://www.reverbnation.com/mattkeating/song/9455268-punchline>)

29. Clairly Browne & the Bangin Rackettes – Vicious Circle. Dramatic, intense, theatrical oldschool soul anthem that may or may not be a bitter Amy Winehouse homage. From their album Baby Caught the Bus; they killed with this in their New York debut this fall at Webster Hall. Play the song (<http://banginrackettes.bandcamp.com/track/vicious-cycle>)

30. J O'Brien- Cottonmouth. Classic New York songwriting: a torrent of images of the kind of twisted people, and twisted psyches, you meet on the train home after work, from the former leader of fiery mod-punk rockers the Dog Show. Play the song (<http://vibedeck.com/j-o-brien>)

31. Out of Order – Gimme Noise. Hammering hardcore riffage from this volcanic all-female noiserock/punk/postpunk trio's deliciously assaultive new album Hey Pussycat! Play the song (<http://www.myspace.com/outofordernoise/music/songs?filter=featured>)

32. Beware the Danger of a Ghost Scorpion – Denton County Casket Co Typically intense, macabre, breakneck horror surf from this unstoppable Boston band's Five After Midnight broadcast recording. Play the song (<http://ghostscorpion.bandcamp.com/track/five-after-midnight-original-broadcast>)
33. Tri-State Conspiracy – The Clone. The high point of their Nuisance album from 2008, the noir ska/swing band's savage version of this was the high point of this year's Atlantic Antic festival, a cruel broadside directed at all the posers and gentrifiers. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhA3bEGeFbs>)
34. Les Sans Culottes – DSK. Another highlight of the Atlantic Antic, this viciously funny garage-psychedelic sendup of Dominique Strauss-Kahn hasn't made it to the web yet, but you can check out a lot of other amusing stuff from the faux French rockers here (<http://www.lessansculottes.com>).
35. David J – Not Long for This World. The ominous title track to the goth songwriting legend's latest album, the once and future Bauhaus bassist/playwright turned in a riveting version of this backed by Botanica's Paul Wallfisch at the Delancey this past spring. Watch a video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLLA4rX6Izg>)
36. The NY Gypsy All-Stars – Sen Sev Beni. Their latest album Romantech is full of scorching gypsy vamps driven by clarinet powerhouse Ismail Lumanovski: this audience favorite is the best of them. Play the song (<http://soundcloud.com/sawaskingcole/06-sen-sev-beni-ciftetelli>)
37. Auktyon – Mimo. These Russian art-rockers have been around forever, and they put out a typically surreal, jazz and gypsy-influenced new album, Top, this year. This is the best track, a haunting, towering minor-key anthem. Play the song (<http://soundcloud.com/auktyon/08-1>)
38. Harmonia – Songs from Vojvodina. This prosaic title doesn't give any idea of the ferocity and exhilaration of this lickety-split suite of gypsy music from the Cleveland band's equally adrenalizing 2012 album Hidden Legacy. (<http://soundcloud.com/auktyon/08-1>) Sound snippet (<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/harmonia2>)
39. Nathan Halpern – The Mirror. A creepy Philip Glass-ine theme from the soundtrack to the documentary Marina Abramovic: The Artist Is Present, written by the esteemed Brooklyn noir rocker and composer. Sound samples from the score (<http://www.copticonmusic.com>)
40. Sam Llanas – Shyne. Low-key, brooding nocturnal noir 60s pop with an Americana edge from the longtime BoDeans frontman's recent solo album 4 AM. Sound snippet (<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/samllanas>)
41. Super Hi-Fi – We Will Begin Again. The darkest and most mysterious track from the twin trombone deep-dub band's debut album Dub to the Bone (get it?) Play the song (<https://soundcloud.com/super-hi-fi/dub-to-the-bone-album-sampler>)
42. LJ Murphy – Waiting by the Lamppost. The legendary New York noir rocker has a reputedly phenomenal new album due out next year and this might or might not be on it; it's an unusually low-key, broodingly surreal soul song. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CobH8TxKAK0>)
43. Mighty High – High on the Cross. Of all the drugs Brooklyn's best-loved stoner rock parodists chronicle in their songs, none is more powerful – or funnier – than religion. Play the song (<http://www.reverbnation.com/mightyhighbrooklyn/songs>)
44. Band of Outsiders – Gods of Happenstance. Television and the Grateful Dead may both be history but these 80s New York garage-psychedelic-punk legends are still going strong; this is the standout track from their 2012 ep Sound Beach Quartet and it evokes the best of both of those bands. Play the song (<http://www.myspace.com/bandofoutsiders1>)
45. Spanglish Fly – The Po-Po. Oldschool 60s style latin soul about a familiar New York crisis: getting busted for an open container by cops who haven't yet met their quota of summonses for harmless offenses. Play the song (<http://spanglishfly.bandcamp.com/>)

46. Love Camp 7 – Beatles VI. An especially loud, growling vintage 60s psychedelic style track with one of frontman Dann Baker’s characteristically sardonic lyrics, the 60s as a gloomy backdrop to the Fab Four. From their brilliant Beatles-themed album Love Camp VII. Play the song (<http://lovecamp7.bandcamp.com/album/love-camp-vii>)
47. Musiciens Sans Frontieres – Legalize. This song from cinematic guitarist/composer Thomas Simon’s artsy rock-pop project won an award for best video at a hemp film festival and you can watch that video here (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_vgUuDowRg).
48. Marcellus Hall – Afterglow. This might not be the right title, and it doesn’t seem to be anywhere on the web, which is too bad: it’s one of the former White Hassle frontman and Americana-punk songwriter’s funniest, and most withering – and catchiest – critiques. Band info (<http://www.marcellushall.com>)
49. The Ryan Truesdell Big Band – Punjab. Not what you might expect to see here on a daily basis – a recently rediscovered, epic Gil Evans big band noir classic, with lustrous Indian and Middle Eastern shades. From the new album Centennial: Newly Discovered Works of Gil Evans. Play the song (<http://soundcloud.com/alvarin-harmonia/07-punjab-by-ryan-truesdell>)
- 50 The Universal Thump – Opening Night. What an absolutely gorgeous song: late-period ELO with better strings, bigger theatrics and much better vocals from bandleader/singer Greta Gertler. She meets a girl in her dream who offers her a deal: if you bring me from the dream world to reality, you’ll never cry again. Think about that. Play the song (<http://theuniversalthumpmaster.bandcamp.com/>)
51. Slavic Soul Party – Draganin Cocek. The high point of the ten-piece Balkan brass band’s scorching, eclectic new New York Underground Tapes – which don’t seem to have made it to the web yet. Stream some similar tracks (<http://www.reverbnation.com/slavicsoulparty>)
52. Magges – Ena Vraithi Pou’Vrehe. It may be all Greek to you, but even if you don’t speak the language, the ringing twin bouzouki riffs and haunting gothic undercurrent of their psychedelic classics will pull you under. From their new album 12 Tragouthia. Play the song (<http://magges.bandcamp.com/>)
53. Wadada Leo Smith – Emmett Till. An epic narrative from the trumpeter’s Ten Freedom Summers concept album about the Civil Rights movement, this cinematic tale eventually hits a horrific crescendo, equal parts jazz and indie classical. Play the song (<http://grooveshark.com/#!/search/song?q=Wadada+Leo+Smith+Emmett+Till%3A+Defiant%2C+Fearless>)
54. Bettye LaVette – Choices I’ve Made. The soul survivor took this old George Jone song and made a theme for anybody who’s ever lived to regret something or another. She sang an especially shattering version at Madison Square Park this past summer. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3b1KJfj1BtY>)
55. Marcel Khalife – Palestinian Mawwal. The great Lebanese oud player and composer put out a titanic double album, Fall of the Moon this year and this is one of its high points, a lush Middle Eastern anthem with full orchestra and choir. Play the song (<http://marcelkhalife.bandcamp.com/album/fall-of-the-moon>)
56. Alfredo Rodriguez – Fog. Noir soundtrack music doesn’t get any more haunting or evocative than the Cuban-American jazz pianist’s epic from his latest album Sounds of Space. Play the song (<http://www.myspace.com/alfredorodriguezmusic/music/songs/fog-86521926>)
57. Hot Club of Detroit – Midnight in Detroit. Proof that noir can be done just as well by a gypsy jazz bandk, in a minute 45 seconds. From their latest album Junction. Play the song (<http://www.myspace.com/hotclubofdetroit/music/songs/midnight-in-detroit-88205191>)
58. EST – Three Falling Free. A rare outtake from the now-defunct, artsy, eclectic trio, this epic, Floydian monstrosity builds to a crushing crescendo with the piano and bass going full blast: you want adrenaline? Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqCNOmCDfKI>)
59. Israel Vibration – Ball of Fire. This apocalyptic roots reggae tune goes back almost as far as Culture’s Two Sevens

Clash, and it's even better. And the band kicked ass with it at Central Park Summerstage this past August. [Watch the video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mw9E0Ng-IaM) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mw9E0Ng-IaM>)

60. Klezwoods – Charambe. One of many standout tracks from their new album *The 30th Meridian – From Cairo to St. Petersburg With Love*, this is a wicked blend of 60s style psychedelic rock and klezmer, like something the Electric Prunes would have done. [Play the song](http://www.klezwoods.com/site/media/) (<http://www.klezwoods.com/site/media/>)

61. Glass Anchors – Winter Home. Sadness and longing set to wickedly evocative, catchy janglerock from the female-fronted, Americana-tinged Brooklyn band's debut album. [Play the song](http://glassanchors.com) (<http://glassanchors.com>)

62. Bobtown – Battle Creek. High-voltage noir soul anthem from the point of view of a country girl steadily losing it in northern Midwest rust belt hell, sung electrifyingly by Karen Dahlstrom. From the noir Americana band's killer new album *Trouble I Wrought*. [Play the song](http://bobtownmusic.bandcamp.com/track/battle-creek) (<http://bobtownmusic.bandcamp.com/track/battle-creek>)

63. Chicago Stone Lightning Band – Tears & Sorrow. Creepy, brooding early 70s style acid blues from the Chicago band's considerably more energetic debut album. [Play the song](http://chicagostonelightingband.bandcamp.com) (<http://chicagostonelightingband.bandcamp.com>)

64. Single Red Cent – Dilettante. A hilarious postpunk-flavored putdown of spoiled trendoids, "stealing a page from the better bands, nothing in common with the working man." [Play the song](http://www.singleredcent.com/) (<http://www.singleredcent.com/>)

65. Wahid – Looking for Paradise. New Middle Eastern instrumental sounds: hard to imagine that just an oud and drums can create a sound that's this majestic and intense. From the duo's new album *Road Poem*. [Sound snippe](http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/wahid1) (<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/wahid1>)t

66. The Larch – Monkey Happy Hour. Wry, spot-on double entendres abound in this psychedelic new wave look at the last people you'd ever want to hang with after work. From their excellent new album *Days to the West*. [Play the song](http://thelarch.bandcamp.com) (<http://thelarch.bandcamp.com>)

67. Sex Mob – Juliet of the Spirits. Even though the noir-ish jazz quartet's version of the classic Nino Rota film theme is nowhere to be found on the web, it wouldn't be fair to leave it off the list: the riveting version they played at the World Financial Center this past fall might have been their first time, and it was amazing. [Band info](http://www.stevenbernstein.net) (<http://www.stevenbernstein.net>)

68. M Shanghai String Band – Sea Monster
This offhandedly eerie, symbolically-fueled, gypsy-tinged cut might be the best one on the massive Brooklyn Americana band's new album *Two Thousand Pennies*. [Play the song](http://mshanghai.bandcamp.com) (<http://mshanghai.bandcamp.com>)

69. Clare & the Reasons- Colder. An icy art-rock mini-epic from the Brooklyn band, with a chilling mantra on the way out: "When will it get better?" [Watch the video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWwhkeExBaI) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWwhkeExBaI>)

70. Animation – Transparent Heart. The epic, cinematic instrumental title track from saxophonist Bob Belden's concept album about how New York (and the country) went to hell, as the Bush regime used 9/11 as a pretext for dismantling 200 years of democracy, and New York became a haven for chain stores and suburban yuppie cluelessness. [Play the song](http://www.rarenoiserecords.com/jukebox/animation/transparent-heart/) (<http://www.rarenoiserecords.com/jukebox/animation/transparent-heart/>)

71. Yankee Bamg Bang – Silver Bullet. The backlash against gentrifier music is in full effect from these Bollywood-influenced Brooklyn rockers, poking fun at "love songs we couldn't swallow from musician/actor/models." [Play the song/free download](http://www.yankeebangbang.com) (<http://www.yankeebangbang.com>)

72. My Education – For All My Friends. Syd Barrett meets Nektar in this roaring ten-minute art-rock theme, rising to a titanic wall of frantic tremolo-picking. From their latest album *A Drink For All My Friends*. [Play the song](http://myeducation.bandcamp.com/music) (<http://myeducation.bandcamp.com/music>)

73. Amniotic Fluid – Be Careful Children. Creepy cinematics with virtuoso clarinet, accordion and percussion in under two minutes. From their fiery debut album. [Sound snippet](http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/vaskodukovski) (<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/vaskodukovski>)

74. Theo Bleckmann & ACME – To the Night. Like Sex Mob at #67 above, the list wouldn't be complete without a mention of the rich, otherworldly debut that this crooner and indie chamber ensemble gave to Phil Kline's new song cycle, Oud Cold, this past November. This is its high point, a feast of lustrous close harmonies. Not on the web yet, but you can check out the composer's other intriguing song sequences (<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8F82153D937495F7>).
75. Tom Shaner – She Will Shine. One of the highlights of the southwestern gothic rocker's new album Ghosts Songs, Waltzes & Rock & Roll is a hilarious song called She's an Unstoppable Hipster. This is sort of that song in reverse: gentrifier girl goes to the country because she's sick of the city...or she just can't hack it? This one's not on the web but the first song is, in a very funny video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfMVSD9GY9>)
76. Tift Merritt – Small Talk Relations. The Americana chanteuse's latest album Traveling Alone is the best guitar album of the year, with Marc Ribot's noir playing off Eric Heywood's steel and slide work. Ironically, this quiet, elegant country-politan number is the album's best cut. Play the song/free download (http://freemusicarchive.org/music/Tift_Merritt/Live_at_WFMU_on_Shrunken_Planets_May_26th_2012/Tift_Merritt_-_05_-_Small_Talk_Relations)
77. Ramzi Aburedwan – Rahil. An absolutely sizzling, smashingly catchy theme for buzuq, accordion and percussion by the Palestinian virtuoso/composer, from his latest album Reflections of Palestine. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxSumdRChNI>)
78. Arturo O'Farril & the Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra – River Blue. One of the best concerts in New York this year was the first of two nights by this amazing, titanic band right after the hurricane: this darkly majestic Rafi Malkiel Middle Eastern jazz epic is arguably the high point. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=st2eBashxsk>)
79. Ran Blake & Sara Serpa – Dr. Mabuse. With piano and wordless vocals, the noir jazz legend and his protegee evoke a troubled world of the spirits. From their live album Aurora, which is on Spotify (<http://open.spotify.com/track/4MdObaRDSSqBCvXgJwxyow>) if you have it; otherwise, good luck looking around.
80. Tom Warnick & World's Fair- The Impostor. Kafkaesque rock doesn't get any more intense than this: watch the keyboardist/bandleader finding it impossible to refrain from jumping back into the vocals after he's handed them over to guitarist John Sharples on this noir classic. Here's the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWr5zRrjgU>)
81. Terrible Feelings – Blank Heads. This female-fronted punk band sounds like a dead ringer for the Avengers circa 1979, with rich Steve Jones style production. No streaming audio, but a free download (<http://www.terriblefeelings.com>) from the band
82. Karthala 72 – Diable du Feu. Horror surf guitar grafted to a classic Afrobeat vamp with evil, buzzy bass by this period-perfect Brooklyn crew. Title track from their excellent new album. Play the song (<http://soundcloud.com/big-world-publishing/karthala-72-diable-du-feu>).
83. Spottiswoode -Enfant Terrible. This one came out a few years back, but the veteran art-rockers killed with this savage anti-trendoid broadside at a haphazardly assembled but absolutely brilliant show in the West Village right after the hurricane. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VreqxwH7JM>)
84. Jaffa Road – Through the Mist of Your Eyes. A luscious Middle Eastern psychedelic rock tune from the eclectic female-fronted Canadian band. Play the song/free download (<http://soundcloud.com/jaffa-road/through-the-mist-of-your-eyes>)
85. The Funk Ark – El Rancho Motel. In case you think that Ethiopian cumbia is a crazy idea, check out this wickedly fun, creepily surfy track from the Washington, DC Afrobeat band's excellent new album High Noon. Watch the video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWl4nrfgVq8>)
86. Deleon – A La Nana. A creepy, stately minor key flamenco-flavored waltz with banjo as the lead instrument from this excellent Sephardic rock band. Play the song (<http://www.ilovedeleon.com>)

87. Raya Brass Band – Melochrino. The hard-charging Balkan brass jamband is just as good at brooding, slowly unwinding, chromatically charged tunes like this one. From their phenomenal debut album *Dancing on Roses, Dancing on Cinders*. [Play the song \(http://rayabrassband1.bandcamp.com/\)](http://rayabrassband1.bandcamp.com/)
88. Andrew Collberg – Back on the Shore. A frequent Giant Sand collaborator, he writes period-perfect mid-80s style paisley underground psychedelic rock. This is a lush, haunting noir southwestern gothic anthem. [Watch the video \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UEUU511WtY\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UEUU511WtY)
89. Tim Foljahn – New Light. From his brooding, pessimistic, absolutely haunting apocalypse concept album *Songs for an Age of Extinction*, this one artfully doubles the vocals: one track blithe and clueless, the other less so. [Play the song \(http://kiamrecords.bandcamp.com/album/songs-for-an-age-of-extinction\)](http://kiamrecords.bandcamp.com/album/songs-for-an-age-of-extinction)
90. The Sweetback Sisters – Texas Bluebonnets
The harmonies and the melody of this oldschool western swing/Tex-Mex tune are so charming and chipper you know there has to be a sad undercurrent...and there sure is. "Those Texas bluebonnets just blew me away." From their excellent album *Lookin' for a Fight*. [Watch the video \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjg4ciQVzUI\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjg4ciQVzUI)
91. The Brixton Riot – Keep It Like a Secret. Snarling two-guitar rock from this New Jersey band, all too aware of how the Bush-era police state still lingers and makes you watch your back. From their scorching new album *Palace Amusements*. [Play the song \(http://thebrixtonriot.bandcamp.com\)](http://thebrixtonriot.bandcamp.com)
92. Botanica – Manuscripts Don't Burn. How the hell did the most epic, intense, grand guignol track from this era's greatest art-rock band end up way down here? Roll of the dice. Sorry, guys. From their arguably most haunted, brooding album *What Do You Believe*. [Play the song \(http://www.botanicaisaband.com/\)](http://www.botanicaisaband.com/)
93. Black Fortress of Opium – Afyonkazar Battle Cry. The female-fronted Boston band artfully crescendo from stately Middle Eastern sonics to a ferocious cauldron of dreampop guitar. From their new album *Stratospherical*. [Play the song \(http://blackfortressofopium.bandcamp.com\)](http://blackfortressofopium.bandcamp.com)
94. Leigh Marble – Holden. The last of the anti-trendoid anthems here might be the funniest, which is ironic (in the true sense of the word) in that the Portland, Oregon songwriter's latest album *Where the Knives Meet Between the Rows* is otherwise extremely dark. The title here is a Salinger reference. [Play the song \(http://leighmarble.bandcamp.com\)](http://leighmarble.bandcamp.com)
95. Marissa Nadler -The Wrecking Ball Company. Metaphorical, inscrutably deadpan, deathly noir atmospheric from this era's unrivalled mistress of that style. From her latest and possibly best album *The Sister*. [Play the song \(http://marissanadler.bandcamp.com/\)](http://marissanadler.bandcamp.com/)
96. Mucca Pazza – Last Days. An artsy, Russian-tinged accordion waltz from this titanically powerful gypsy punk brass band's latest album *Safety Last*. [Play the song \(http://muccapazza.com/songs/\)](http://muccapazza.com/songs/)
97. Niyaz – Shosin. A characteristically hypnotic, pulsing track from the Persian-Canadian dance/trance band's latest album *Sumud* (Arabic for "resilience"). [Watch the video \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSZzVF4HorE\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSZzVF4HorE)
98. Tribecastan – Jovanka. The darkest song on the eclectic-beyond-belief New York kitchen-sink worldbeat band's latest album *New Deli* is sort of a balalaika bolero except that the web of stringed instruments is everything but a balalaika. [Watch the video \(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GtG5KCKTnYY\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GtG5KCKTnYY)
99. Rachele Garniez – Land of the Living
The unexpectedly triumphant closing track on the inscrutable accordionist/chanteuse's latest album *Sad Dead Alive Happy*, it starts with a devious dream sequence of sorts and ends with a warmly wry, indelibly New York stoop conversation. [Play the song \(http://www.myspace.com/garniez/music/albums/sad-dead-alive-happy-18233484\)](http://www.myspace.com/garniez/music/albums/sad-dead-alive-happy-18233484)
100. Catspaw – Curl Up & Die. Let's wrap up this list with a careening ghoulabilly track from this brooding 2/3 female New York retro rock trio. It's a staple of their live show but hasn't made it to the web yet – although you can hear their classic, even more haunting *Southbound Line* here [\(http://www.myspace.com/catspaw/music/songs?\)](http://www.myspace.com/catspaw/music/songs?)

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