

# Album of the Week: Carissa Johnson and the Cure-Alls - *Talk Talk Talk*

## TALK TALK TALK



CARISSA JOHNSON AND THE CURE-ALLS

*Talk Talk Talk* by Carissa Johnson and the Cure-Alls

Carissa Johnson is a musician who has been injecting rock music with a refreshing dose of originality for the past few years. Her blend of '70s punk, power-pop and melodic modern flair has put her at the forefront of Boston's legendary music scene. She also hits the road with her backing band known as the Cure-Alls often, and they've gained loyal followings throughout the United States. Johnson and her band, featuring drummer Nick Hall and guitarist Steph Curran, recently self-released their third LP, *Talk Talk Talk*, on Mar 10. It's an album that's a hard-hitting display of lyrical honesty and musical amplification.

For a mostly DIY record, *Talk Talk Talk* has a very professional sound quality. That's due to the production skills of Doug Batchelder and Benny Grotto along with Jay Frigoletto taking on the mastering duties. Every track on the album is rhythmically tight while being not too long and not too short. It's music that's ideal for the rock enthusiast who can't stand it when a song is longer than four minutes. There are plenty of memorable riffs, courtesy of Curran and Johnson's bass guitar lines that meld perfectly with Hall's beats.

Johnson, Curran and Hall's artistic ascendancy goes to show how good the local music of New England has been recently. Talented acts from all genres, and some that fuse a few together, have been popping up on a monthly basis. It varies from established vets starting new bands to kids in their late teens graduating high school and wanting to take on their city's scene. The high concentration of bands and musicians in such a small region of the country is astounding. To see how this trio takes their rightful place in this burgeoning community, let's dabble with my top tracks off of the Album of the Week:

Curran's riffs are best exhibited in "After All" - they capture a pristine tone that's magnificently electrifying while not being overly distorted. "Home" is fast-paced and fun with a hybrid of harmony and

vigor; what makes the track even more enjoyable is a cat's meow finishing it off. Starting off acoustically into an emotional spark plug is the best way to describe the gem that's "Two Weeks."

Johnson and the Cure-Alls' next show is with Los Angeles electro-psych rock duo War Twins and fellow Bostonians The Stampede at the Thunder Road Music Club and Rock 'n' Roll Bistro in Somerville, MA, on Mar 26. They've played Providence a few times, so be on the lookout for when they'll be coming back. Before you see them live, make sure to grab a copy of *Talk Talk Talk* and turn it up: It's a bold take on rock that definitely shreds.

*Talk Talk Talk*: [carissajohnsonmusic.com/shop/talk-talk-talk-carissa-johnson-and-the-cure-alls](http://carissajohnsonmusic.com/shop/talk-talk-talk-carissa-johnson-and-the-cure-alls)

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*Correction: The contributions of Benny Grotto and Jay Frigoletto in production were incorrectly omitted in a prior version of this article. We regret the error.*