

[Keep on Moving: Howling: New albums and spooky shows](#)

Christians & Lions – Young Familiar

Christians & Lions, a self-described “New England DIY dreamfolk collective,” is out with the album *Young Familiar*, the group’s first release after a 10-year gap, and the album is nothing short of spectacular.

Frontman Ben Potrykus led indie rock outfit Bent Shapes in the ‘10s, and founded screamo band Receiving End of Sirens in the ‘00s, among other projects. Compared to these bands, *Young Familiar* seems to draw on the unfamiliar; Potrykus is apparently one of these enviable characters who can thrive in all styles of music.

The playing, melodies and songwriting are all very high quality, with the occasional orchestral swell that elevates the album. The horns and harmonies of “The Swailing” reminds me of Calexico, and features evocative, stirring lyrics: “Holy ghoster of raw decryptor/roots, stalks and leaves feed family trees in Warsaw with blood memories and faith.”

The album keeps its roots in fairly well-worn templates, but goes in different directions. C&R moves from edgy folk-rock (“Tell the Keeper”), to ethereal, pseudo-Bright Eyes (“Professional Medium”) to more traditional fingerpicking (“Lucky Ghost”).

On the experimental side, “Is To As Are To” reminds me of the Barr Brothers mixed with Nick Drake, and “Palekh” is a kind of gypsy ska in the vein of Camper Van Beethoven. This album shows the decade of growth, and explores many different areas in a way that is never hacky or novelty. C&R is that side project that ends up being as good as anything you’ve ever done.

Check out *Young Familiar* at: christiansandlions.bandcamp.com/album/young-familiar

Letters to Jenny – *Glitter and Gore*

Glitter and Gore is the second release from Cranston's Letters to Jenny. This EP harkens back the days of radio-friendly alternative metal and hard rock in the early 2000s. Their sound keeps the fuzz pedals fully engaged, but maintains a certain studio slickness; *Glitter and Gore* is a fairly apt description.

Singer Alyssa Martineau's vocals reminds me of Amy Lee mixed with Hayley Williams. Songs like "Monster (Make Me the Villain)," with the line "I'm your sweet disaster" seem a bit one-dimensional and a rehashing of the alt-rock era. "Play Nice" is along similar lines, but with some killer drum fills — big ups to drummer Chris "Fraggle" Rossi.

For my money, Letters to Jenny hit their stride when going outside the drama of the nu-metal chassis into more upbeat territory. "You Could Be The One" is my personal favorite, a hard-edged romance with an almost bubble gum element to it. "Bore Me to Death" is solid pop-punk a la New Found Glory that takes me back to my youth.

Check out *Glitter and Gore* at letterstojenny.bandcamp.com/album/glitter-and-gore

Doctor Gasp - An M.D. in Fright

Every year around this time, Doctor Gasp invades the body of accomplished songwriter Dan Blakeslee, and brings his roots-tinged horror-themed music to the New England masses. Since 2005, the Doctor has been petrifying audiences with his performances, complete with costumes and occasionally a full band (The Eecks).

Gaspeheads (as I assume the hardcore fans are called) were treated this month to a new release from the archives, *At The Abandoned Woodshop*, which includes tracks like "Teeth Of Candycorn" and "She, Vampire Tamer" that was recorded back in 2008. Gasp's sound recalls influences of ragtime and old-time jazz and is a heightened, more dramatic version of Blakeslee's music. The area's premier Halloween-based entertainer is certainly something to see.

Doctor Gasp has a show at the Columbus Theatre on Saturday, October 26 along with **Vudu Sister's Keith McCurdy** (spooky) and Boston's punk surf band **Beware The Dangers Of A Ghost Scorpion** (extra spooky).

For Dr. Gasp's full tour dates, visit: doctorgasp.com

Other shows that will give you a fright (or are at least labelled “Halloween” on the internet) include:

Two-part Hammer Halloween Fest at Alchemy: Oct 25 — The Fairview, Familiar Spaces, In Good Nature & more; Oct 26 — Bicycle Inn, Eleanor and the Pretty Things; Square Loop

A Big Lebowski Halloween! at Askew feat. an unclear relation to the film, and performances by Noble Dust, Charlie Marie, and The Wolff Sisters on Oct 25

Courthouse Center for the Arts’ 5th Annual Halloween Gala feat. James Montgomery on Oct 25

Ocean Mist’s Halloween Bash 2019 feat. Nate Bash Band on Oct 26

Nick-A-Nees’s Spooky Shindig Halloween Party with Becky Lynn Blanca & Friends on Oct 31

ASKEW’S 2nd Annual Halloween Show feat. Toad and the Stooligans, Bochek, and Badword\$, and a costume contest with prizes on Oct 31

Fete’s Devil’s Feedback Halloween Party with Fathom Farewell, In The Red, Lusus, Firsbourne, American Grim, Silver City Gents on Nov 1

And finally, a funny tidbit from an 83-year-old former rock ‘n’ roll accountant. Laurence Myers, accountant to bands like Bowie and Rod Stewart, is out with a new tell-all, and reported that Mick Jagger said at the time, “I’m not going to be singing rock & roll when I’m 60.” Things did not exactly go as planned for Jagger, who now has a 2-year-old child with a dancer less than half his age.

It’s good to see the accountants getting a piece of the pie; if you think about it, maybe they’re the unsung heroes. I have to think these bands wouldn’t have the stability to throw TVs out hotel windows if there wasn’t competent money management happening behind the scenes.