

# **Pandemic at the Disco: Music venues are empty, but RI keeps rocking out**

## **Heading For A Clampdown**

As much as I liked the idea of every Yankees, Giants or Jets fan being stopped on the highway without probable cause and the state police forbidding them from leaving their houses — that idea was bat shit crazy. And even though crossing our borders now gives automatic quarantine to people from all states — not just New York — I think this is completely unconstitutional and a draconian abuse of power. What are we going to do next, build Trump's wall around Rhode Island? There seems to be a thin line between public safety and an Orwellian state. I get the seriousness. I was too scared to see my dad, who isn't in the best of health, last week on his 76th birthday because I couldn't live with myself if I infected him with COVID-19. That sucked. I get the importance of not overwhelming hospitals. Certainly all the healthcare workers are superheroes and should be issued capes. My blessings to all of them and their families, and let's be safe together (by distancing) in these very weird times. Without further *adieu*, let's get to the top three must-see shows of April.

Cancelled

Cancelled

Cancelled

Well those were a hoot! Here are three artists that have been doing livestream shows from home that I've been rocking out to.

**Low Cut Connie:** Next shows are Thursday and Saturday at 6pm.

**Jesse Malin:** Next shows are Wednesday and Saturday; check the interwebs for times.

**Ben Nichols (from Lucero):** Check Lucero's social media page for upcoming times.

As the great prophet Strummer once sang, “Know Your Rights” and let’s be safe. Here are some of the new releases to rock your Great Quarantine of 2020 playlists.

### **Micah Schnabel — *The Teenage Years of the 21st Century***

On this solo album, the Two Cow Garage troubadour, Micah Schnabel, spins tales of emergency room visits and searching for empathy amidst toxic masculinity in the context of a broader struggle to survive. The youthful idealism of “How To Ride A Bike” is pitted against being in the non-1% trying to survive. “A Celebration” sets up my favorite tune on the album, “Filthy Cash,” which deals with racism and erupts in a coffee shop celebration of community equality. “Remain Silent” is packed with all-too-true musings like “when did being a decent human being become political, how have we’ve become so dark hearted and cynical” *The Teenage Years of the 21st* is an honest (pre-COVID-19 because who saw this shit coming) examination of life in the 21st century. I give it a 7.1 for the optimism in battling a losing cause.

### **Mister Frizzle — *Sophomoric***

I caught wind that Mister Frizzle was some folk rock thing, which begged the question: Why isn’t this going to Fuzek? But in these times where everybody is losing their rights and minds, I dove deeper and listened to their first album, *Blue Monday*, and then the new biscuit *Sophomoric*. The differences are stark as *Sophomoric* is a much better recording and has a punch. As far as folk, I don’t see it. “Crazy” sounds like an outtake of a fictional jam session between Screaming Trees and The Afghan Whigs. “Shark Song” reminds me of Pavement. “Money To Spend” and “Take Me Away” have an early Weezer vibe. “Born In The 70’s” channels the first two albums Radiohead with the nostalgia wish in the title. I don’t really get that because those of us who were born in the ’70s wish they were born earlier to experience the ’70s punk rock explosion. I guess it’s just a generational thing where we glorify those golden times before us. Whatever is clever, I listened to that tune three times in a row so it must be working on some level. My favorite jam here is “Money To Spend” which, like most of the record, is not quite as catchy as COVID-19, but more like a less contagious version of the flu on the infectious scale. Mister Frizzle will release *Sophomoric* on April 17 on all your favorite streaming services. There is a big release show booked at Askew, which almost certainly won’t happen. In the meantime, give *Sophomoric* a listen in your quarantine casa, I give it a solid 6.7.

### **Bob Dylan — “Murder Most Foul”**

Dropping from seemingly out of nowhere, “Murder Most Foul” is the first new song from Dylan since 2012’s *Tempest* album. Over the course of the nearly 17-minute-long track, Dylan interweaves a non-stop stream of pop culture poetry while continually coming back to JFK’s assassination. “Murder Most

Foul" floats over a breezy jazz as Dylan references Charlie Parker, Marilyn Monroe, Patsy Cline, The Beatles, Woodstock, Altamont, The Who, Nightmare on Elm Street, and too many more to mention. As far as history songs, "Murder Most Foul" is a much darker candlelit jazz than say Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire," although Dylan does reference Joel's "Only The Good Die Young." Scary tune for scary times for sure, it's just not as good as "Things Have Changed" on the Dylan haunting scale. I give it a 5.8.

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