

OUR FAVORITE SONGS IN MAY



AMY HELM'S NEW ALBUM IS CALLED "WHAT THE FLOOD LEAVES BEHIND." PHOTO BY ERU YILDIZ

Tune in to *BRO's* Trail Mix playlist of new music, mainly focusing on independent artists from the South. In May we're highlighting new tunes from Amy Helm and Hiss Golden Messenger, plus a collaboration between songwriting ace John Hiatt and progressive bluegrass outfit the Jerry Douglas Band.

BY JEDD FERRIS AND DAVE STALLARD

John Hiatt and the Jerry Douglas Band

"All the Lilacs in Ohio"

■ Songwriting giant John Hiatt went to Nashville's famed **RCA Studio B** with ace string outfit the Jerry Douglas Band to record his latest album "Leftover Feelings." Anchored by an earworm chorus, album standout "All the Lilacs in Ohio" combines Hiatt's narrative mastery and knack for rustic melody as it unravels through the vivid memories of a loner lamenting unrequited love. Hiatt's craggy vocals are livened by the mesmerizing dobro work of Douglas—a 14-time Grammy winner—who takes a wild solo before the song's final chorus. —*J.F.*

The Steel Woods

"All Of Your Stones"

■ Still reeling from the unexpected loss of founding member Jason "Rowdy" Cope in January, few bands are carrying heavier stones right now than the Steel Woods. Undeterred, the band carries on, releasing "All of Your Stones" as a tribute to their fallen brother this month. The title track, an ode to love

lost and building on the past, finds the band as tight as ever, offering their best contributions yet to the Southern rock songbook in the face of deepest tragedy. —*D.S.*

Amy Helm

"Breathing"

■ Helm—daughter of the late, legendary drummer Levon Helm of the Band—embraces a retro soul direction of the lead single from upcoming album "What the Flood Leaves Behind." Propelled by funky horn lines and a dance-inducing beat, "Breathing" is a succinct track that makes a plea for mutual understanding through an infectious groove. Helm recorded her latest at her father's studio in her native Woodstock, N.Y., with help from an impressive cast of collaborators, including producer Josh Kaufman and singer-songwriters Erin Rae and Maty Gauthier. —*J.F.*

Bowerbirds

"Moon Phase"

■ In the nine years since this North Carolina indie-folk outfit released its last album, "The Clearing," singer-

songwriter Phil Moore split up with his romantic partner and artistic collaborator Beth Tacular. As he carries the Bowerbirds forward on the new record "Becalmyounglovers," Moore sounds like he's still searching for answers after the breakup, especially in the contemplative "Moon Phase," an earthy track punctuated by emotive fiddle that is full of questions about the permanence of lost love. —*J.F.*

Graham Sharp

"Truer Picture of Me"

■ Truest love comes from those who know our deepest selves, the people we are beyond the images and anecdotes we share on social media. Graham Sharp, longtime banjoist for Grammy-winning bluegrass outfit **Steep Canyon Rangers**, delves deeply into this warts-and-all notion of love on the title track from his new debut album, his somber tenor resonating with the hope that those we love will love us back, even when our shortcomings are crystal clear. —*D.S.*

Hiss Golden Messenger

"Sanctuary"

■ Following 2019's Grammy-nominated "Terms of Surrender," Hiss Golden Messenger—the freewheeling vehicle for the songs of North Carolina's MC Taylor—is back with a new album, "Quietly Blowing It," next month. "Sanctuary," a breezy backroads ramble, offers empathy in response to the fear, vitriol, and loss (including a callout to

the late John Prine) of the past year-plus. "You want to move/ You want sanctuary," Taylor sings in laid-back drawl, tapping into our feelings with a comforting ease. —*J.F.*

The Pine Hill Haints

"Satchel Paige Blues"

When the Pine Hill Haints play, the ghosts of early **Sun Records** recording sessions and smoky Delta juke joints are conjured up to shake their bones. Supernatural sounds are only appropriate for a band named after a cemetery. On "Satchel Paige Blues," longtime singer Jamie Barrier's raspy vocals soar over washtub bass and solo snare to continue the quarter century tradition of squawk box punk rockabilly that the Alabama quintet has cultivated. —*D.S.*

Bill & the Belles

"Happy Again (I'll Never Be)"

■ All that's missing when you spin a track from Bill & the Belles is the hiss of a 78 in the background. The **Birthplace of Country Music Museum's Farm & Fun Time** radio showcase channels vintage old-time radio groups that frequented the **Grand Ole Opry** or the **Ozark Jubilee** in their heydays. "Happy Again (I'll Never Be)" is a classic down-on-your-luck tale, driven by plucky piano, banjo, and fiddle, that will have you gathered 'round the old Zenith for a listen. —*D.S.* 🎧



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