

8 **CARDIACS** A Little Man And A House And The Whole World Window ALPHABET BUSINESS CONCERN



Still sounding arrestingly weird and gloriously wonky 35 years on, Cardiacs'

debut remains an attention-grabbing explosion of crazy-paving mania, avant-punk surrealism and wildly promiscuous stylistic overload. Three additional discs featured radio and studio sessions plus a 1987 live show, although it's the main album which captured visionary frontman Tim Smith's flair for discordant extremes and accessible melody.

7 **ARKANE** AR Kive ROCKET GIRL



The brilliant and enigmatic British duo AR Kane – pioneers of both dream-pop and trip-hop – finally got their dues this year with a lavish box set compiling their first two albums, 1988's *69* and 1989's *i*, plus the transitional "Up Home" EP. Strange, sensual, political and sometimes even danceable ("A Love From Outer Space" gave its name to an eclectic club night that's still packing them in), AR Kane's unique blend remains intoxicating.

6 **DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS** The Complete Dirty South NEW WEST



The Drive-By Truckers envisioned their fifth album as something expansive and novelistic: a double LP of heavy Southern rock about moonshiners, redneck sheriffs, smalltown criminals and doomed rockers. Nearly 20 years after reluctantly editing *The Dirty South* down to a single disc, the band made good on their original vision by remastering and resequencing it, which not only enlarged that Southern landscape but added new colours and consequences.

5 **BOB DYLAN** The Bootleg Series Vol 17: Fragments – Time Out Of Mind Sessions (1996–1997) COLUMBIA/LEGACY RECORDINGS



The volume many had been longing for: a deep dive into the haunting 1997 masterpiece that

kickstarted Dylan's late-career hot streak. Unheard takes from the vaults revealed the radical changes songs went through during the semi-organised chaos of the sessions as Dylan and producer Daniel Lanois' visions clashed and merged. Controversially, the set also featured a new mix of this beloved album which pointedly altered its character from Lanois' original swamp-mist sound.

4 **JONI MITCHELL** Archives Volume 3: The Asylum Years (1972–1975) RHINO



This glorious collection of outtakes, demos and live tracks explored Mitchell's continued musical and emotional journey as she moved, following the success of *Blue*, increasingly towards jazz. What to add to *For The Roses*, *Court And Spark* and *The Hissing Of Summer Lawns*? How about versions of "You Turn Me On I'm A Radio" and "Raised On Robbery" with Neil Young & The Stray Gators for starters?

3 **ARTHUR RUSSELL** Picture Of Bunny Rabbit AUDIKA/ROUGH TRADE



Another stunning addition to the most impressive posthumous discography in music. These tracks were recorded around the same time as Russell's now-beloved 1986 cello'n'FX album *World Of Echo*, occupying the same dreamy, liminal space. Key finds were the woozy tape collage of the title track and a drum-less deconstruction of his psychedelic disco tune "In The Light Of The Miracle".

2 **NEIL YOUNG** Chrome Dreams REPRISE



A typically busy year for Young, including his first live shows since 2019, a two night stand at LA's Roxy with a reborn Santa Monica Flyers while a redux *Ragged Glory* offered rare Crazy Horse jams. Meanwhile, the release of this mythic 'lost' album from 1977 captured both sides of Young's sonic spectrum, from the fragile fire-crackle of "Will To Love" to the fuzz-stomp of "Sedan Delivery". Surely, now it's time for *Archives 3*...?

10 BOB DYLAN Shadow Kingdom

COLUMBIA/LEGACY
RECORDINGS



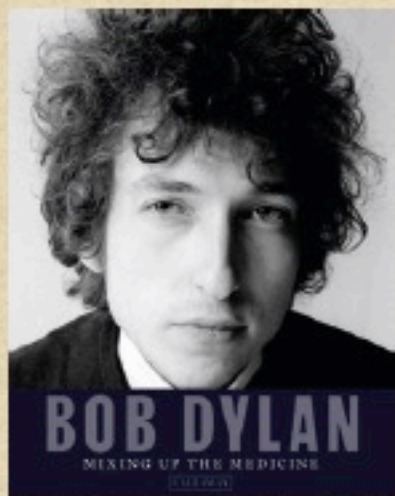
Ostensibly the soundtrack to Dylan's 50-minute show streamed in July 2021, *Shadow Kingdom* came with its own predictably mischievous provenance. The musicians who mimed along with the singer were not those who had played on the tracks. But such sleight of hand aside, Dylan breathed fresh life into these "early songs", from the unbearably tender "Queen Jane Approximately" to the pounding rockabilly stomp of "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight".

BOOK OF THE YEAR

1 BOB DYLAN: MIXING UP THE MEDICINE

MARK DAVIDSON & PARKER FISHEL

CALLAWAY



THIS book of treasures from the Bob Dylan Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is a catalogue of beautiful ephemera that functions as a living memorial to its subject, while also illustrating the depths of Dylan's creativity. There are many beautiful photographs, stretching from the grizzled present back to the innocent intensity of Bob's 1957 high school yearbook photo, with numerous artful cigarettes in between.

Among those attempting to grapple with Dylan's effects are Lee Ranaldo, who tracks down the young Bob's first acetates, and Richard Hell, who analyses the *Blood On The Tracks* notebooks in search of clues to Dylan's expansive genius. "Bob is just more of everything," he concludes. 🕒