

ALBUM PREVIEW 2010

Save your pocket money and/or increase your download limit – it's going to be a big year, with heavy hitters and first-time faves returning **By James Jennings**



REMEMBER THEM?
The Avalanches in 2001.
Are we finally gonna get
them back again?

The Avalanches

It's really coming this time... Right?

In the decade since the release of their debut – 2000's scintillating, genre-hopping, mind-fuck of an album, *Since I Left You* – the Avalanches have reportedly committed to tape – and scrapped – a couple of new records, cut orchestral parts with Van Dyke Parks and run a Melbourne club night called “Brains” (the last bit, at least, we can be certain of). Now it seems the hipster version of *Chinese Democracy* might actually see the light of day: a MySpace update states the group are “clearing samples” and word from the band's

label Modular is that album two is indeed on the way (although, they are quick to point out that they have said that once or twice before during the last decade). With their touring line-up – including DJ Dexter and James De La Cruz – having long since moved on, the pressure is on for the core trio of Robbie Chater, Darren Seltmann and Tony Diblasi to deliver the goods to patient fans. While that's a heavy cross to bear for the band, at least they know that everyone is still interested in what they're gonna come up with.

Arcade Fire

Prepare for another opus

Wayne Coyne's least favourite band have spent more than half of 2009 holed up in a studio with *Neon Bible* producer Markus Dravs. A single is rumoured early this year with an album likely around May – a pretty sure bet since the band have already begun booking live shows around this time.

Beastie Boys

Hip-hoppers rise from adversity

Initially set for a September '09 release, the Beasties' eighth studio album was put on hold after Adam “MCA” Yauch was diagnosed with cancer. With the rapper now on the mend, the group hope to release the album, a combo of live playing and sampling, in the first half of '10 – not to mention a “Part 2” later in the year.

Black Keys

Duo poised for bigger things

The drum and guitar duo recorded much of its new disc, planned for an April release, at Muscle Shoals studio in Alabama with producer Mark Neill. While the band aren't revealing much, Neill has boasted that the disc will be “their biggest statement... the equivalent to Radiohead's *OK Computer*.”

Blink-182

Pop-punk's not dead...

After the band went on indefinite hiatus following Tom DeLonge's acrimonious departure in '05, the Blink boys are buddies once more and are currently recording their sixth album before they embark on a European tour midway through this year. Due first is Travis Barker's debut solo disc, also set to feature a brand new Blink song.

Broken Bells

Shins on board for new release

Serial collaborator Danger Mouse has teamed with James Mercer of the Shins for an album due in March – first taste “The High

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Road" sounds like a glossier Shins with a dose of Eighties video game effects. No word if this release will hold up a new Shins album, which had been set for early '10.

Children Collide

Melburnians ready for round two

After the critical and commercial success of their debut, *The Long Now*, Children Collide this month started work on their follow-up. The Melbourne trio have enlisted production guru Youth to helm the project, recording in studios in Spain and London (yes, obviously they need both) over the next few months. Rob Schnapf is apparently also on board to mix, and the album is due mid-year.

Christina Aguilera

Pop songstress goes indie

After selling more than 43 million albums worldwide, the former Mouseketeer looks to be courting indie cred with the list of collaborators for her forthcoming album: Sia, M.I.A., Santigold, Ladytron, Le Tigre and Goldfrapp among them. Aguilera revealed on her on-line station, iheartradio, that the resulting music is "crazy magic".

Coldplay

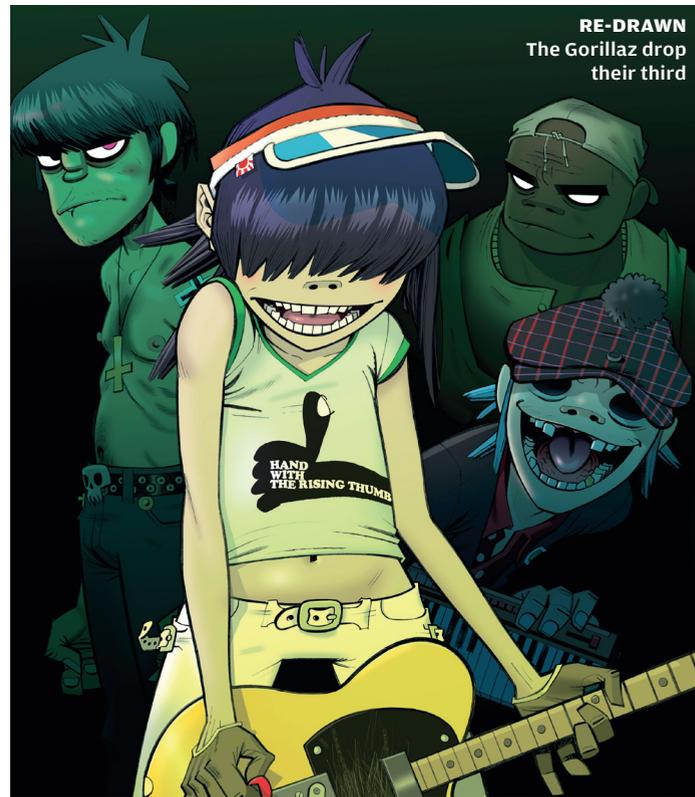
English juggernaut rolls on

Happy with how things turned out on last album, gazillion-selling *Viva La Vida*, Coldplay are again calling on Brian Eno to help them craft LP five. Reports indicate the band are hard at work recording a more "stripped down" set in a dilapidated north London church.

Daft Punk

Electro darlings on film

In a match made in robo-heaven, French dance duo Daft Punk have



RE-DRAWN
The Gorillaz drop
their third

Gorillaz

Big names queue up to collaborate

Fresh off a triumphant series of Blur reunion shows, Damon Albarn returns with Gorillaz' third outing, *Plastic Beach*. Albarn says it's his most "pop" album yet, and the confirmed guests – Lou Reed, Bobby Womack, Snoop Dogg, Mos Def and Barry Gibb – indicate it'll likely be the weirdest "pop" album you'll hear all year. Other artists rumored to appear on the early March release include *Feel Good Inc.* veterans De La Soul (on the tracks "Sloped Tropics" and "Electric Shock"), nu-goth Brits the Horrors, and several seagulls recorded on a landfill site near London – denizens of the artificial beach referred to in the album's title. The group's cartoon character members will also return, although, according to real-life member Jamie Hewitt, they'll be "a little bit older".

recorded the score for the sequel to a 1982 film about being sucked into a computer. The pair have already recorded 24 pieces of music for the film – due December – and are also set to make a cameo.

The Deftones

Starting from scratch

The Sacramento metal heavyweights were in the middle of recording album number six, *Eros*, when bass player Chi Cheng was involved in a November 2008 car crash that left him in a permanent coma. Rather than complete the album without him, the band started fresh with new bassist Sergio Vega. The album is being produced by Nick Raskulinecz (Foo Fighters, Ash, Trivium) and should

be ready mid-year. *Eros* will appear in some form at a later date.

Devo

Just 20 years later ...

Devo's first new album since 1990's *Smooth Noodle Maps* finds them in a funny place: "De-evolution isn't a far-out quack theory anymore," says bassist Gerald Casale. The new tracks have all been recorded, but most are being re-mixed by producers like LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy and Alan Moulder to ensure maximum weirdness.

Eminem

Rapper relapses - again

Forgoing pill popping in favour of logging some serious studio time,

Marshall Mathers has almost completed the sequel to 2009's *Relapse*. Now he's free of drugs, Em told Complex.com that he's back in top form and "going for songs instead of one-liners". Dr. Dre – who's long-gestating *Detox* album is also promised this year – contributes production.

Fleet Foxes

Get serious on sophomore LP

The debut album from the nu-folk critical darlings of '08 was loved by most – except lead fox Robin Pecknold. "I listened to the first record again, and I was kind of non-plussed," he confessed to *Pitchfork* recently. As for new songs, Pecknold says it'll be less "pop": "As a whole, it's probably a little less upbeat."

Hathaway & Palmer (Daniel Johns and Luke Steele)

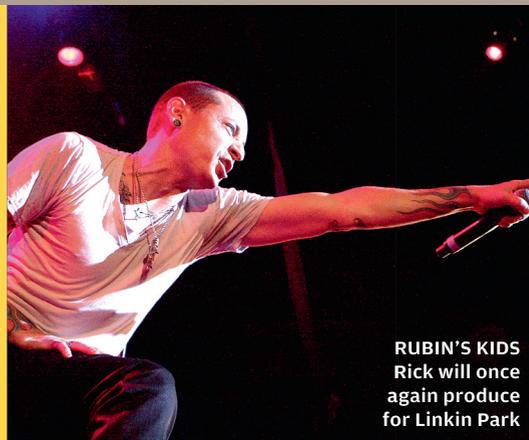
Aussie heavyweights team up

Two of Oz music's biggest hitters have been intermittently recording together over the last few years with hopes of getting an album done – that album is likely to be released this year. Coming off a bumper '09 with a swag of ARIAs, Luke Steele has also written a new Sleepy Jackson album set to surface in 2010.

Linkin Park

Superproducer returns to help reinvent rock & roll

With 50 million albums sold worldwide, Linkin Park are now in the luxurious position of being able to do whatever they damn well please – including reinventing music as we know it. Mike Shinoda boasted to ROLLING STONE that "they're going to have to come up with a new genre name for what this record is". The co-frontman also recently revealed via his website that the band have five songs finished and another, "15-20 songs that we like, and we'll be picking a new batch [to work on] from those". Bearded rock guru Rick Rubin is once again behind the boards.



RUBIN'S KIDS
Rick will once
again produce
for Linkin Park

GETTY IMAGES (LINKIN PARK)

The Hold Steady

Could it be another concept?

Brooklyn alt-rock storytellers the Hold Steady reconnect with producer Dean Baltulonis for their fifth album, due in the first half of 2010. Baltulonis co-produced the group's acclaimed second set, *Separation Sunday*, which was as dense and literate as the famously wordy outfit have ever been. The band have already debuted new songs live, including "Our Whole Lives" and "Separate Vacations", hinting at yet another concept album.

Interpol

A new direction... or maybe not

The New Yorkers have been hard at work on album four – they just can't agree what it sounds like. Drummer Sam Fogarino told *Paste* that, "the new record falls back towards the first"; however, singer Paul Banks sees it differently. He told BBC 6 Music that the new album is "very different... there's some really classical stuff going on".

Kanye West

Bigger and brasher than ever

Kanye might have one of the biggest mouths in music, but love him or loathe him, the 32-year-old rapper also has the record sales to match his lippy demeanour. A recent blog post on West's site revealed he's back in the studio recording – this time, we hope, without the aid of Auto-Tune.



FREAKS MGMT try to deal with the craziness

MGMT

How do you follow up a smash hit?

Their last album *Oracular Spectacular* went supernova, and now all eyes are on the Brooklyn psych-pop duo to see if they can repeat the trick. Unsurprisingly, vocalist Andrew VanWyngarden told the *San Francisco Examiner* that "it's us trying to deal with all the craziness that's been going on since our last album took off. Sometimes it just doesn't feel natural." Recorded in a Malibu house with founding duo Ben Goldwasser and VanWyngarden as well as the band's touring line-up of Matthew Asti, James Richardson and Will Berman (with vocal contributions from Royal Trux singer Jennifer Herrema), *Congratulations* is produced by former Spacemen 3 member Sonic Boom and mixed by frequent Flaming Lips collaborator Dave Fridmann.

Kings of Leon

Prepare to take over the world

After finally breaking the U.S. with fourth album *Only By the Night*, the Followill clan are understandably taking a six-month break after a huge '09 – but that doesn't mean they haven't already got the majority of album five in the bag. "We have 10 songs already," drummer Nathan Followill revealed to *Q*.

LCD Soundsystem

Keep mystery about third effort

Due in April, LCD mainman James Murphy gave some hints about the sound of album three to *Drowned In Sound*: "The few things I've written for it and worked on are more spartan and muscular... it's wonky and a bit more synth-driven, but not necessarily more dancey. I don't know. Everything might change."

My Chemical Romance

Rockers try to capture live sound

Keen to distance his band from the "emo" tag by branding the genre a "pile of shit", Gerard Way and co are aiming to capture their raw live energy on their Brendan O'Brien-helmed fourth album. Way told *ROLLING STONE* the songs are all "wildly different", which might make emo fans sadder than usual.

My Morning Jacket

Back to the daily grind

After taking a break with Monsters of Folk, Jim James told BBC 6 Music he's ready to return to MMJ: "We're working on stuff but we're just trying to keep it real stress-free, real low-key. I'd say we're knocking around three or four songs but they're still pretty rough."

OutKast

Still together – and still solo

After numerous side projects – Andre 3000 acting, Big Boi collaborating with the Atlanta Ballet – OutKast have plans for a new album. But the wait isn't over: first there'll be two solo albums, with Big Boi's *Sir Luscious Left Foot: The Son of Chico Dusty* up first.

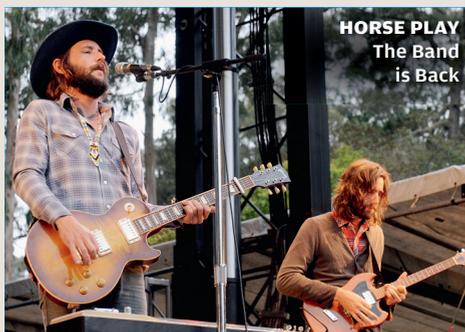
The Panics

W.A.'s finest go a little bit weird

After spending several months in Ol' Blighty and building up a Brit

Under the Radar

Seven smaller (but equally impressive) releases to keep an eye out for this year



HORSE PLAY The Band is Back

Band of Horses

Third record brings back the folk

Single "Is There a Ghost" from last album *Cease to Begin* put these bearded folk rockers on the map, and now they're back in the studio with producer Phil Ek (Modest Mouse, Fleet Foxes, Built To Spill) cooking up album number three. New songs debuted live are said to be more on the "folk" end of the folk-rock spectrum.

Madvillain

Duo in fine fettle

The duo of rapper DOOM and producer Madlib are currently working on the follow-up to their lauded 2004 underground hip hop masterpiece *Madvillainy*. Sneak previews of new material show the pair in top form with typically dense, brain-bending rhymes from DOOM and layered, stoner-friendly beats from Madlib.

Tame Impala

LP finally on the way

Decamping for several months in 2009 to record at a coastal house four hours south of Perth in Injidup, W.A.,

psych-rockers Tame Impala are gearing up to release their anticipated debut. If songs played during the 2010 Big Day Out are any indication, fans are in for a trippy, space rockin' good time.

Sia

Wunderkid hits scene

Adelaide-born Sia Furler – whose song "Breathe Me" became so ubiquitous that it soundtracked a TV ad for Coles – releases her fourth album in April. First single "You've Changed" already has "pop hit" written all over it – a possible side effect of Sia's working alongside new best bud Christina Aguilera.

Foals

Expect weirdness

Named after a communal house used by Oxford bands, *The House of Supreme Mathematics* has been recorded in Gothenburg, Sweden. Unhelpfully, the band have described the follow-up to *Antidotes* as "sort of like an inside-out chicken in glorious technicolour, but a bit more vegetarian and a bit less funk". Expect it in the first quarter of '10.

British India

Third album ready

Recorded in Melbourne's Sing Sing studios at the same time that Rob Thomas was working there (a fact

the British India lads had some trouble dealing with) the Melbourne four-piece's third album has been produced by Glen Goldsmith and features a more experimental approach than previous efforts.

Gyroscope

Bigger and better

The Gyro lads have spent the last few months in Wales with acclaimed producer Gil Norton (Foo Fighters, Pixies), cutting a disc that is all about capturing their live sound. "For this album, I am looking at making them a rock record that they can go on tour and do stadiums with," Norton explains.

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SYNTH ROCK
Daniel Johns

Silverchair

Guitars are out, experimentation is in

Suffering a case of writer's block, Daniel Johns headed to New York last year and returned with an avalanche of new tunes. Already well under way after recording sessions in remote N.S.W., the big news about Silverchair's sixth album is that it's largely guitar-free. "It's dirtier – it doesn't feel as polished and pop. The main difference is there's a lot of experimentation with instruments and synths . . . I think there's only guitar on four songs out of 50 so far," Johns told Triple J. "We're just doing a lot of jamming with old Brian Eno synths and stuff. It's surprisingly rocky considering there's no guitars." Expect it later this year.

fan base, W.A.'s the Panics have returned to Oz to start work on the follow-up to their breakthrough album *Cruel Guards*. Singer Jae Laffer told FasterLouder that listeners can expect "a few strange numbers, and a few rockers".

Radiohead

Risking death in recording studio

Despite Thom Yorke's dramatic proclamation that "[recording another album will] kill us" and a couple of so-so '09 internet singles, Radiohead are indeed recording an album with frequent collaborator Nigel Godrich. Guitarist Ed O'Brien confirmed to *NME* the band are recording now and plan to release an album this year.

R.E.M.

Number 15 is on the way

Having produced 2008's semi-return to form *Accelerate*, Irish producer Jacknife Lee is back once again for R.E.M.'s 15th album. Michael Stipe has posted sever-

al clips online from the New Orleans recording sessions that feature a brass section – and a hint the band may be returning to the textured, mournful sounds of *Automatic For the People*.

The Roots

Inspired by Bush's downfall

Now the house band on *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon*, the Roots are hoping to translate their increased exposure into record sales with their ninth album. The soul-influenced title track "How I Got Over" features the singing of MC Black Thought, who has revealed the "positive" album is influenced by the end of the Bush era.

Scissor Sisters

New Yorkers ramp up the sleaze

Produced by pop maestro Stuart Price (Madonna, Kylie Minogue, the Killers), the third album from New York's disco mavens Scissor Sisters is currently scheduled for a March release. Jake Shears has

said the album will be "super-sexual and sleazy", with Ana Matronic describing possible single "Invisible Light" as "magical and wizardy".

U2

Irishmen slow things down

With a wealth of unreleased material left over from the *No Line On The Horizon* sessions, expect a new U2 album sooner rather than later. Set to be a more "meditative" set of songs, *Songs of Ascent* will likely include "Every Breaking Wave": "Lots of people got upset when we took that off [*Horizon*]," says Bono.

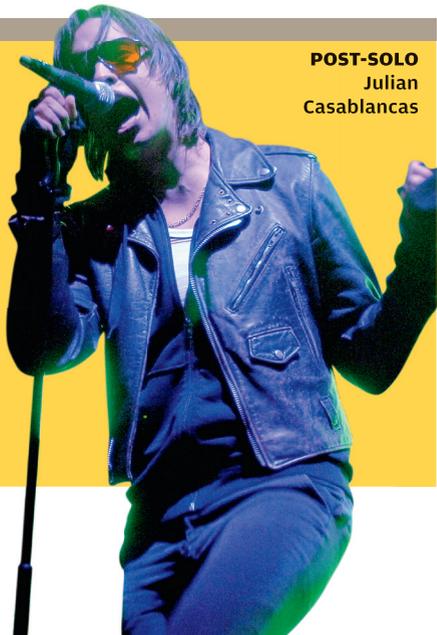
The Verses

'Cos Heidi's now officially dead

Siblings Jesse and Ella Hooper have ditched the Killing Heidi moniker and are back with their new "mature" venture, the Verses. Alt-country and Seventies AM rock are the new order of the day, the band's sound already sporting a recognizable influence from recent touring partners Fleetwood Mac.

The Strokes Quintet haven't self-destructed

After solo albums and other assorted projects from four of the five Strokes, the New York quintet are finally set to return with a follow-up to 2006's *First Impressions of Earth*. Initially scheduled to appear late last year, *Before I Self Destruct* has been delayed amid rumours of inter-band tensions. Julian Casablancas told spin.com that the band had already spent seven months in the studio, but less encouragingly revealed that although they have more than 20 songs in the can, "I still don't know what's going on." A tad more optimistic is guitarist Albert Hammond Jr., who told *ROLLING STONE* that the new album is written and that further recording has already commenced. Stay tuned . . .



POST-SOLO
Julian Casablancas

ALSO RELEASED

Cut Off Your Hands

New line-up to make their first recordings early this year

Dr. Dre

Expected in March, Dre has said *Detox* will be his final album

Elbow

Follow-up to Mercury Prize winning fourth album is due late 2010

Estelle

Her guest-heavy third album is being produced by David Guetta

Gaslight Anthem

With more eyes watching now, bigger things are expected

Noel Gallagher

Long-awaited solo disc might arrive now Oasis have passed on

H.I.M.

Screamworks: Love in Theory and Practice is due in February

Klaxons

Ross Robinson is now helping with very difficult second album

Natalie Merchant

Lyricaly driven, experimental disc is her first in 13 years

The National

Brooklyn-based indie rockers have new set slated for late-2010

Joanna Newsom

Have One On Me is confirmed for a February 23rd release

Pendulum

London-based Perth genre-crossers drop *Immersion* in May

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers

Blues-based, jammy, Allman-influenced disc is due in March

School of Seven Bells

Disconnect of Desire is expected before the middle of the year

Mark Sholtez

Currently working on a new album in L.A. with producer Larry Klein

Serj Tankian

SOAD singer is working on a symphony version of first solo disc

The Wombats

New single, "My Circuitboard City" in March, album to follow

Amy Winehouse

Comeback rumoured to not include Mark Ronson or Dap-Kings

The Vasco Era

Scott Horscroft-produced second LP is due early in 2010

Album information and dates confirmed as of press time. Due to various factors, information may change.