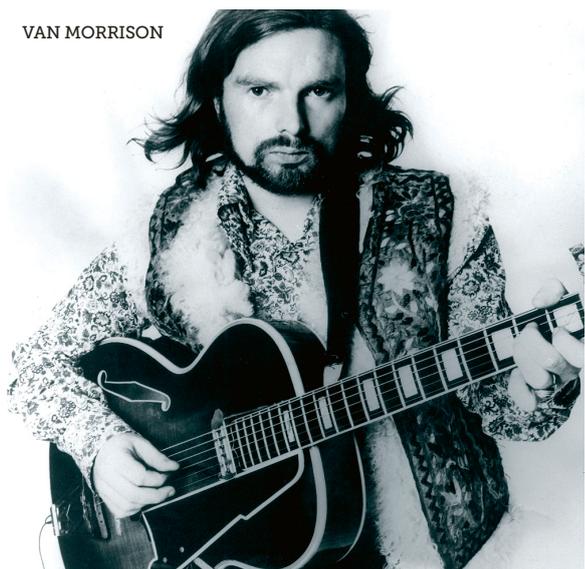


MUSIC

VAN MORRISON



DOUG WALLEN Music Editor

WHEN PEOPLE THINK of Van Morrison's 1970 album *Moondance*, the title track often springs to mind first. But there's more to the record than that flute-kissed breeze of jazzy fluency, which still stands as Morrison's signature tune outside of 'Brown Eyed Girl'. There's the opening 'And It Stoned Me', a widely covered tune that I've cued up on more than a few pub jukeboxes during a lazy afternoon. The feel-good 'Everyone' memorably closed Wes Anderson's 2001 film *The Royal Tenenbaums*, and 'Crazy Love' is one of the most heart-melting ballads of all time.

Of course, every song on there is a classic. That's what makes it a classic album. More than four decades after its making, *Moondance* returns in late October in remastered form and three different editions – the deluxe one spanning four CDs and a blu-ray with 50 alternative takes and remixes unearthed from the original recording sessions. It might seem strange to listen to multiple takes of one song in a row, but music fans have always been fascinated with pulling back the curtain on famous recordings. And there's so much going on across *Moondance* – namely, the babbling merger of jazz, folk, rock, soul and other tributaries – that it's especially interesting to chart the path-not-taken of these canonised songs.

Moondance sometimes takes a backseat to its 1968 predecessor, *Astral Weeks*, but it follows that album's mercurial lead while doubling as a well-deserved commercial breakthrough. Besides, there's room at the table for both.

ALL DAY VENUS ADALITA

★★★★½

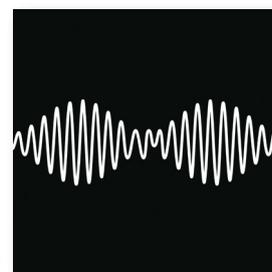
Having already established herself outside of Geelong rock band Magic Dirt with her self-titled 2011 solo debut, it seems Adalita Srsen has nothing to prove on this second album – except to herself. The record was born from a period of serious self-reflection, personal growth and that age-old songwriter's muse: moving on. The emotion that pours from these songs is so real it almost literally throbs with each note, each down-strum, each drumbeat. This is as personal a record as you're likely to hear all year, and that honesty makes *All Day Venus* more than just a rock'n'roll record. Working with regular Magic Dirt producer Lindsay Gravina, Adalita has kept this one simple musically, which gives her lyrics all the more room to shine. Against a fuzzy electric backdrop (it *is* still a rock record at heart), she tackles lost love and friendship with a gravitas that shows – hopefully to her, too – that she's one of the best around. **SAMUEL J FELL**



AM ARCTIC MONKEYS

★★★★½

This fifth album from Sheffield's shape-shifting indie-punks turned guitar-rockers is one for fans of *Suck it and See* (2011) – building on the good work of its predecessor with an unusual aural texture. An angrier-sounding Alex Turner opens proceedings with 'Do I Wanna Know?'. Its hypnotic, persistent riffs and throbbing bass build throughout the album, tipping the influence of Queens of the Stone Age's Josh Homme and culminating in the Black Sabbath homage, 'Arabella'. Lad-rock single 'Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High?' resonates as a brief wink to the band's past, whereas *AM*'s smoky singalong sound takes full control on the standout 'R U Mine?'. *AM* is undeniably tongue-in-cheek fun, partnering Turner's lauded turn of phrase and iconic croak with a deliberate, introspective lyrical flow and soul-tinged support vocals. It provides an unexpected costume change, which continues Arctic Monkeys' progression away from their New Wave roots. **SAM GRAY**



DREAM RIVER BILL CALLAHAN

★★★★★

Recorded in Texas earlier this year, *Dream River* is the newest submission from the artist formerly known as Smog. Dissimilar to *Apocalypse* (2011) by way of widespread experimentation, this release stays truer to Callahan's lo-fi repute with subtle sonic swings. Intriguingly, Callahan dabbles in a little dub throughout: 'Javelin Unlanding' feeds off a 1970s soul trace, with conga beat, flute breaks and modern guitar squalls manipulating the song's direction. 'Ride My Arrow' is another to induce the genre, with hand drums and loungey strumming the order of the day. Narratives are immense as always – poetic and prophetic – and this time they work a seasonal angle with 'Spring', 'Summer Painter' and 'Winter Road'. His spoken vocals continue to saunter about in phantasmagoric fashion lyrically, and these charming fables inevitably (and appreciatively) burn into the listener's brain. And, in another Callahan twist, he has also released a 12-inch single entitled 'Expanding Dub': a remix of selected *Dream River* songs. **NICK ARGYRIOU**

