

SOUNDCHECK



SWEET SORROW

Vince Gill brings the melancholy home

Fans who believe that sad songs are Country Music Hall of Famer Vince Gill's forte can look forward to a satisfying cry when they hear his first album since 2006, *Guitar Slinger*. Mortality hangs over the set: Will Owsley, who co-wrote two of the album's 11 songs, including the moving first single "Threaten Me With Heaven," committed suicide last year; "Bread and Water" is based loosely on the life of Gill's brother, who died in 1993; "Billy Paul" is about a friend of Gill's who killed a woman and then himself; and the album's closing song, "Buttermilk John," salutes longtime Gill steel guitarist John Hughey, who died in 2007. "This is the first record I made without him in 20 years, and it's one reason why I took so long to make another record," Gill says. "I knew it was going to be hard."

Gill recorded *Guitar Slinger* in the studio he recently built at his Nashville home. "I've never recorded in my house before," he notes. "I discovered an awful lot about how the rooms sound, and it's a real warm record. I don't know what it is, but it's so different from most studios in that there are windows all the way around the room. You look out and see trees."

Gill's 10-year-old daughter with wife Amy Grant, Corrina, makes her vocal debut on the grim "Billy Paul." "I thought, 'This could either be the worst idea I've ever had in my life, or it could be hauntingly great,'" he jokes. The album runs the stylistic gamut, peppered throughout with Gill's tastefully virtuosic fretwork. "I feel like my guitar playing on this record has taken a step up," he says. "It's interesting now, 30-something years into a career, that people are really starting to get a great sense of my guitar playing." *Guitar Slinger* is set for release this fall.

TOP TEN

Write enough great songs, and someday you might find your own name in a song title. Here are a few artists who've penned nods to their influences.



1 Bob Dylan "Song to Woody" (1962)
One of Dylan's first original songs was a tribute to his idol, Woody Guthrie.

2 David Bowie "Song for Bob Dylan" (1971)
Bowie echoed the lyrical structure of "Song to Woody" in this glam-rock turnabout.

3 Phish "David Bowie" (1986)
The band titled this near-instrumental in honor of Bowie's then-upcoming 40th birthday.

4 Stevie Wonder "Sir Duke" (1977)
This celebratory paean to Duke Ellington was prompted by the jazz great's death three years earlier.

5 The Replacements "Alex Chilton" (1987)
Many a young fan discovered Chilton's 1970s band Big Star through this song ...

6 Art Brut "The Replacements" (2009)
... and perhaps modern listeners will likewise seek out the Replacements thanks to Art Brut.

7 Crosby, Stills & Nash "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes" (1969)
The blue-eyed beauty of the title is Stephen Stills' then-girlfriend, Judy Collins.

8 The Band "Bessie Smith" (1975)
Co-writer Rick Danko rhapsodizes sweetly in song about the '20s blues legend.

9 Weezer "Buddy Holly" (1994)
An appropriately catchy pop number released as a single on Sept. 7, 1994, Holly's birthday.

10 LCD Soundsystem "Daft Punk Is Playing at My House" (2005)
LCD leader James Murphy dreams of the electronica duo rocking his ultimate party.

'I REINVENT MYSELF FROM WEEK TO WEEK'
-LADY GAGA
2009

LIVE NOTES



> **A RECONSTITUTED THIN LIZZY WILL HIT THE ROAD IN** North America this fall as opening act for the farewell tour by metal stalwarts Judas Priest. The group—which has reunited sporadically since the 1986 death of original frontman Phil Lynott—now features classic-era guitarist Scott Gorham, drummer Brian Downey and keyboardist Darren Wharton, as well as guitarist Richard Fortus, singer Ricky Warwick and bass player Marco Mendoza. "We love playing in the U.S., and it will be great to show the rest of the States what we are made of," reports Gorham. "We are all fired up and ready to kick some ass."

A VIEW TO A HIT

The James Bond franchise has long been a favorite with moviegoers, and the movies' theme songs have often left audiences shaken and stirred as well. Here are Bond's biggest hits, according to Billboard.

- 1. DURAN DURAN**
"A VIEW TO A KILL," *A View to a Kill*, 1985
- 2. PAUL MCCARTNEY & WINGS**
"LIVE AND LET DIE," *Live and Let Die*, 1973
- 3. CARLY SIMON**
"NOBODY DOES IT BETTER," *The Spy Who Loved Me*, 1977
- 4. SHEENA EASTON**
"FOR YOUR EYES ONLY," *For Your Eyes Only*, 1981
- 5. SHIRLEY BASSEY**
"GOLDFINGER," *Goldfinger*, 1964



COMING SOON



> **RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS (Aug. 30)** *I'm With You* is the band's first album in five years, as well as its first with new guitarist Josh Klinghoffer. The set was recorded in Los Angeles and Malibu with producer Rick Rubin, who has collaborated with the Chili Peppers on each of their albums for the last 20 years.



> **SHONEN KNIFE (July 19)** To celebrate its 30th anniversary, the Japanese trio has recorded a tribute album to one of its original inspirations. Co-produced by Goo Goo Dolls bass player Robby Takac, *Osaka Ramones* features the group's renditions of 13 Ramones classics.

"The Ramones have been my all-time idols since I first heard their music," says frontwoman Naoko Yamano.



> **VAN HUNT (Sept. 27)** *What Were You Hoping For?* is the follow-up to an album that was never released—2008's left-field *Popular* was shelved by Hunt's former label. His return is heralded by the new single, "June," which he says "was written to mirror a person's complicated moodiness. Some people are called pessimists because of their persistent dourness, but I think they are optimists. Sorely disappointed optimists."



> **SKYLAR GREY (Fall)** Buzz has been steadily growing for Grey's debut ever since the Wisconsin native was first heard singing hooks on hits by Dr. Dre, Lupe Fiasco and others. *Invincible* (the quirky spelling is deliberate) was produced by Alexander "Alex Da Kid" Grant, best known for his work with acts like Eminem and B.o.B.

IN THE STUDIO



COUNTRY STAR MIRANDA LAMBERT

'THE BLUES IS NOT A PLAYTHING.'
-SON HOUSE
1970

is putting the finishing touches on the debut album by her new side group, Pistol Annie's. The trio also includes fellow singer-songwriters Ashley Monroe and Angaleena Presley. "The songs we are writing are digging deeper into our country roots and getting back to music that inspired us all," says Lambert. The group performed its first single, "Hell on Heels," during Lambert's set at

the recent CMA Music Festival in Nashville. "Angaleena, Ashley and I are hoping more artists collaborate," she says. "This band is made up of three real country girls with three very real stories to tell."