

REVIEWS

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE



...Like Clockwork

[Matador]

It's been six years since Queens of the Stone Age released *Era Vulgaris*, and in that time, frontman Josh Homme has worked with the supergroup Them Crooked Vultures, and drummer Joey Castillo has left the band. But in spite of—or maybe because of—the time away, the Queens' sixth album reveals a renewed sense of self-assurance. It's evident in the expansive sound, which allows the guitars to fill the space without snuffing out subtler details, and in the complex rhythms and detached vocal delivery of the most sinister lyrics. Even Homme's falsetto has more swagger. Plus, the guest list reads like a who's who of rock. Alongside obvious choices like longtime collaborator Dave Grohl (who drums on the majority of the tracks) and Homme's wife, Brody Dalle, the disc features Arctic Monkey Alex Turner, Trent Reznor and Sir Elton John. No matter how strange some of the decisions seem, each languid keyboard part, 12-string guitar and guest vocal is precisely what each track needs. —Amanda Farah

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