

Reviews



Suicide Swans

Augusta Near Enough ★★★★★

Toowoomba alt-country quintet deliver sophomore outing

Frequently harnessing the travelling sideshow rollick of the Felice Brothers ("Canyons"), *Augusta* simultaneously intensifies the low-slung country-rock undertow of 2015 debut *Ghosts We Forget*. While maintaining the band's cosmic bent ("Broken Lines"), it's a stylistically tighter, sonically meatier offering than its predecessor. The barroom rumble of the coarser guitar parts – see hefty snarler "Horses", and the energising heartland rock urgency of "Yearling" – conjure Lydia Loveless and Drive-By Truckers, while so many glistening textures and melodic undulations align Jenkins and co with local alt-country frontrunners Halfway and Raised By Eagles. GARETH HIPWELL



Langhorne Slim

Lost At Last Vol. 1

Dualtone/Cooking Vinyl ★★★★★

Folk-rock traveller strikes a sweet note on album six

Sean Scolnick trades the country-punk rawness that powered much of *The Spirit Moves* (2015) for endearing folk-pop spontaneity. There's a diamond-in-the-rough quality to these songs that belies the album's proliferation of sonic accoutrements – from the strings of "Life Is Confusing" to the squeezebox zephyrs and tuba of "Ocean City". "House of My Soul" melds the chorus groove of Roy Orbison's "You Got It" with the off-kilter swing of Deer Tick, while there's Simon & Garfunkel-like immediacy in "Private Property". It's impossible to resist the pervading charge of optimism throughout – even in batshit undead/unrequited love song "Zombie". G.H.

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