



Lucrecia Dalton

¡Ay!

RVNG Intl.

Colombia soundscapes

Lucrecia Dalton's mercurial, experimental music assumes another form in her latest album for RVNG Intl. While recent solo, collaborative and soundtrack works have seen her exploring eerie electronics and supernatural sonic terrains, here she returns home, sculpting ten tracks inspired by the sounds and senses of her childhood in Colombia. Her taste for strange, sci-fi sound design comes with her, and the resulting combination is one of uncanny worldbuilding and intoxicating songcraft. Dalton's voice is prominent as she sings in her native Spanish on themes of consciousness and atemporality. Rhythms and musical motifs pull lovingly from bolero, mambo, salsa and merengue traditions, but transform into hallucinatory audio adventures; flourishes of kosmische and trip-hop emerge amid subtle brass, strings and wind arrangements. **EOIN MURRAY**



PVA

BLUSH

Ninja Tune

Post-punk electronic sensation

Custom-built for sweaty raves in the capital's darkest dwellings, PVA's debut album sees the trio more insurgent and intimate than ever. It's a pairing that seems at odds, but then again the South Londoners are known for their complex concoctions; fusing acid and disco with blistering sprechgesang post-punk, 'BLUSH' is brimming with the kind of face-melters that make you question opening a pit in the rave. Motorised, arpeggio synths find industrial grittiness on 'Soap' and 'Bunker', while lead singer Ella Harris flexes her richest wordsmithery yet on 'Hero Man', a skill honed in a self-searching solo project. Her punky musings on masculinity and gender expression take the trio's taut techno to new depths while smirking at the tiresome question: 'Are we a band or are we dance music?' Pouty, pulse-racing and danceable, if PVA didn't have your attention, they will now. **OLIVIA STOCK**



Lala & ce, Low Jack

Baiser Mortel

PAN

Don't fear the reapers

Translated as 'The Kiss Of Death', 'Baiser Mortel' is the score to a contemporary ballet by the French duo, rapper Lala & ce and composer Philippe Hallais, aka Low Jack. To be honest, this reviewer's knowledge of ballet is pretty much limited to watching 'Black Swan', but the disorientating atmosphere of Darren Aronofsky's film feels like a closer reference than clichés about tutus and sugar plum fairies. Decoupled from the physical performance, the music here feels like an exploration of internal worlds, Lala & ce and various collaborators' voices often warped into an eerie glossolalia, and Hallais' electronics sounding even more bleak and hollowed-out than his 2017 'An American Hero' LP. You've no chance of grasping 'Baiser Mortel's' narrative about Death travelling the Earth from this album alone, but this ballet is clearly much more mindbender than nutcracker. **PAUL CLARKE**



Isabella Lovestory

AMOR HARDCORE

Self-release

Reggaeton potpourri

On her latest album Uruguay-born, Montreal-based Isabella Lovestory does what she does best — sultry, bedazzled neoperreo — with features from fellow underground pop shapeshifter MethMath and bigger names like Chucky73 and Ms Nina. Built around the reggaeton staples of dembow beats and steamy lyricism, Isabella Lovestory recontextualizes sounds of nostalgia to concoct her own timeless pop. Take the '90s G-funk synth lead in 'Colocho', or the 8-bit bleeps of 'Tacon'; each track has these bits of sonic flirtation that keep things enticing. The bass weight of 'Fashion Freak' rivals that of the heaviest dark garage and UK dubstep — when the track reloads around two minutes in, it's hardly a surprise. But 'Exibisionista' might be a microcosm of the record: it's the sound of late summer, traces of post-punk guitar beneath the riddim like premonitions of autumn under the oppressive heat. **JAMES GUI**



Telefís

a Dó

Dimple Discs

Fitting swansong

In the '80s and '90s, Cathal Coughlan and Jackknife Lee were understated heroes in Ireland's alternative music scene — the former as frontman of Microdisney and Fatima Mansions, the latter as a guitarist for punk band Compulsion. Telefís, their two-album collaborative project, and the last music Coughlan worked on before his passing in May, is a testament to the pair's enduring experimentalism and creative wit. Coughlan sings his ruminative, classically sardonic lyrics over Lee's jaunty beats, sounding something like Kraftwerk rendered human and wryly satirical. Moving through electro-pop, post-punk and punchy synth-disco, there's little room for bittersweet sentimentality in these songs, which include collabs with A Certain Ratio and Jah Wobble. Tender, poetic moments ('Feed The Light', 'We See Showbands') are lent an added poignancy in context. A fitting swansong. **EOIN MURRAY**



Flohio

Out Of Heart

Because Music

Spit-fire debut

Flohio's long-awaited debut finds the MC showcasing her range across a series of eclectic tracks that go from poppy and melodic, such as on 'Cuddy Buddy' and 'Highest', to more aggressive, borderline drill territory ('Speed Of Light'). The results are impressive and her signature spit-fire delivery and lyrical prowess are ever at the forefront. 'Out Of Heart' courts more accessible melodies while dealing with subjects like anxiety, death and our darker human impulses. She even sings on the catchy hook of 'Leash', a track whose heavy subject matter is undercut by its breezy tune and glitchy beat inspired by playing Super Mario and Final Fantasy as a kid. Flohio showcases a certain versatility across genres and tempos, documenting her personal struggles but never losing any of her bite. The result is at once deeply nostalgic and playfully futuristic. **ANDRA NIKOLAYI**



Daphni

Cherry

Jiaolong

Sweet sounds, ripe rhythms

Originally conceived as a channel for the more club-focused output of Dan Snaith (he of Caribou's dream-pop loveliness), Daphni has always been a boundary-free project focused on upfront sounds. This approach continues on 'Cherry', with a selection of psych-tinged stompers and out-there electronic wanderings. The highlights for many will be the numerous dancefloor-primed tracks that light up the album: the slow-burning house and tripped-out melodies of 'Clavicle', 'Take Two's' uplifting salute to the golden era of disco, and album opener 'Arrow', which blends a soulful vocal with a seriously punchy late-night groove. The title track, too, is another jittery big-hitter. It's yet another record demonstrating Snaith's talent for producing creative, genre-hopping and, somehow, patient club sounds — sometimes subtle but always with plenty of heft behind them when you listen. **TRISTAN PARKER**



Bell Towers

Advanced Style

Public Possession

Seriously silly sounds

'Advanced Style', the sophomore LP from Bell Towers, begins with chintzy synth trills and loose drum fills before a vocoder deadpans: "Ecstatic — dancing on my mind". It's a fitting intro to an album that threads the needle between the kitschy and the funky as '80s synth-pop tropes are soldered onto contemporary club templates. Central to the album is the Australian producer's vocals. For the most part, his voice is made alien through effects that sound like Daft Punk soundtracking Miami Vice. But the album's best tracks see him step out from the shadows with some memorably clear vocal performances — check the smoky jazz house of 'No, Not Today' or 'Scaffolding 4 Support', one of the album's toughest tracks with a low-end that has a hint of UK garage to it. 'Advanced Style' is a tour de force of poppy dance music that never sounds gimmicky. **HENRY IVRY**