

# Enduring a Swedish winter



*"At the heart of it we're a rock band that uses electronic elements for atmosphere"*

Remember The Others, the catchy Dukes Of Windsor single remixed into an ARIA and APRA nominated chart smash last year? Well, it's time to move on. The Dukes certainly have.

On *Minus*, the Victorian five-piece's second album, they don't so much find their feet as notice what daring stunts and sexy moves they can do with them. You may already know the ubiquitous taster single *It's A War*, but that's just one flavour on an album fresh with ideas and energy.

The Dukes formed three years ago in the Melbourne suburb of Windsor. Weaving met guitarist Oscar Dawson

at a local swimming pool where both were working. Dawson was studying music with bassist Joe Franklin. Their paths crossed with Cory Blight (drums) and Scott Targett (keyboards), two schoolmates from Tasmania who had moved to Windsor, and the five bonded over a shared sense of humour and outlook on life, rather than a passion for a particular type of music.

This pretty much explains why Dukes Of Windsor's rushed debut album, 2005's independently released *The Others*, by Weaving's own admission, lacked focus.

"Last time I think we were searching for a sound that we hadn't found yet – which is a process that I guess everyone has to go through before you really discover what you're about".

Now they have rather emphatically discovered this, how would they describe that sound? Electro pop? Synth rock? Yet another new wave of 80s-style new wave?

"I wouldn't give it any of those, to be honest.

I wouldn't even put it anywhere near the electro world. At the heart of it we're a rock band that uses electronic elements for atmosphere, pretty much."

Hence their choice of collaborators on *Minus*. Pelle Henricsson and Eskil Löfström produced one of the band's favourite albums, the seminal *The Shape Of Punk To Come* by 90s hardcore-punk giants Refused, so the Dukes endured the sub-zero temperatures of the Swedish winter (hence the album title) to work with them.

"They'd given *The Shape Of Punk To Come* a real sort of groove I don't think hardcore had really had before that," Weaving says.

"That's what they brought to our album. I kept getting yelled at, down the headphones, to give it more Al Green and more Marvin Gaye. [Pelle and Eskil] really wanted us to give it more soul, which I hope came out in a strange sort of ... clinical Swedish way!"



## Ne-Yo

**Year Of The Gentleman**  
Universal

Grammy-Award winner Ne-Yo, who has impressed audiences with his talents since 2006 with his multi-platinum, chart topping debut, *In My Own Words*, is fed-up with the sloppiness of current R&B.

"Years ago, if you weren't wearing the right suit or have a correct crease in your pants, you couldn't even get in the door—let alone on stage to perform."

With Ne-Yo's third album, *Year of the Gentleman*, the Las Vegas native has constructed a suite of songs that displays his definition of class. Written during his travels through Europe and influenced by his fascination with the Rat Pack, Ne-Yo explains, "For me, the sharpness of Sammy and Sinatra is the kind of style I strive for...*Year of the Gentleman* is named in honour of those guys."

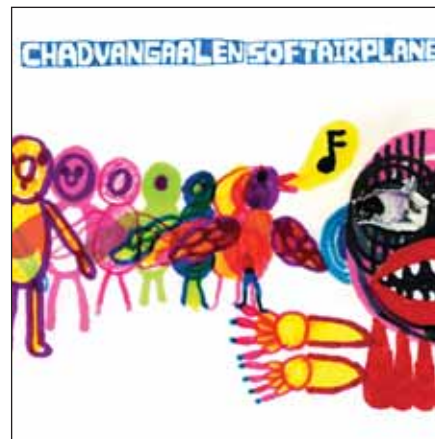


## Blitzen Trapper

**Furr**  
Stomp

*Furr* is the fourth record by Portland sextet Blitzen Trapper and the follow-up to last year's highly acclaimed *Wild Mountain Nation*. Written in the gaps of the group's frenetic touring schedule and recorded mostly in a hoary old telegraph building close by the Willamette River, the new record refines and expands on the far-ranging yet distinctive songcraft that lies at the heart of Blitzen Trapper's unique appeal.

Blitzen Trapper is a group of native Northwesterners, most of whom grew up in Salem, Oregon. They have lived and played together in Portland since 2000. After Sub Pop released *Wild Mountain Nation* in June of 2007, the group ventured beyond the West Coast for the first time to tour extensively in Europe and North America.



## Chad VanGaal

**Soft Airplane**  
Stomp

Chad VanGaal's musical roots date back to the first part of the decade, when he made a living busking on the streets of Calgary. He is also an accomplished animator and illustrator whose music is very much informed by his appreciation of visual arts. He has produced a voluminous wealth of material, by himself, at a rate that might best be described as alarming. Recorded primarily on an old tape machine and a JVC ghetto blaster in Chad's Calgary basement, *Soft Airplane* retains the handmade charm and singular character of his previous records, while incorporating new layers of sophistication and weight.



## Tigercity

**Pretend Not To Love**  
Stomp

Borrowing liberally from early 80s FM pop and the great history of non-rock, Tigercity have gobbled up nearly every form of slick-yet-soulful music from the 70s and 80s and made them their own.

Their well-combined guitar-driven electronic pop has them compared to acts such as Hall & Oates, BeeGees, late period Roxy Music, Prince and Talking Heads. Sleek disco infused stylings inform their sound with splashes of vintage non ironic 80s pop of Scritti Politti & Prefab Sprout. It is the sound of sweet falsetto vocals and drum tight choruses and crashing bridges. Tigercity have managed to mash an impressive amount of our favourite (both guilty and non-guilty) pleasures into one easy-to-digest package.