

RECORDS OF THE YEAR 2010

Somethin' Else's records of 2010; think of it as a last minute holiday gift guide or music to trade your unwanted jumper for in the January sales. A Spotify playlist of some of the highlights is [right here](#)



Ed: Album: Tinie Tempah - Disc-covery (Parlophone) Apart from the terrible, terrible name this album surprised the hell out of me. I was expecting a below-par affair peppered with good singles but this is all killer/no filler. Fantastic production, constantly interesting, varied and cheeky melodies and how can you argue with a rapper who raps about a Dyson and his aunts house? Ace.

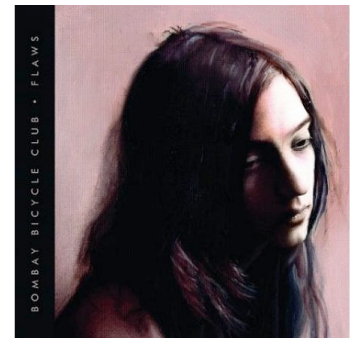
Tune: T.E.E.D – Garden (Greco Roman) Blippy, bleepy, dance based goodness with an awesomely addictive vocal line. Scrumptious.

Steve: Tune: Aloe Black - I Need A Dollar (Stones Throw) Great old soul sound to a really catchy tune. You'd think this is a 1970s classic instead of something new. The best lyrical summing up of the personal cost that recessions have on real people and it was a summer soundtrack sing along for me and my kids!

David O'Donnell: Album: Kanye West - My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy (Roc-A-Fella) Despite being a douche, Kanye dares to do what he wants to, not caring too much about the consequences. Someone quite fairly wrote "It's probably impossible to get any higher, but we can almost certainly do better", but MBDTF still wins for me because as a grandiose, over-the-top, mess, it works.

Tune: James Blake – CMYK (R&S) With twisted vocals, skittling drums and neon synths, James Blake manages to bring emotion to bass music.

Phil: Album: Bombay Bicycle Club – Flaws (Island) Unlike Bombay Bicycle Club's previous albums, Flaws has a very different feel. The 11 tracks that feature on it stripped back and acoustic and I think it really demonstrates how accomplished they are. I found the album very delicate, consuming and an ideal listen if you are looking for a bit of space.



Tune: Sage Francis – Best of Times (Anti) Listening to this tune by Sage Francis is a sentimental overload. The emotional, self-pitying, insecurity of the lyrics tell a very relatable and heartfelt story. The track benefits from the handy work of Yann Tiersen and if you like Sigur Ros and spoken word then this track is certainly worth a listen.

Tom George: Album: Delphic – Acolyte (Polydor) This album came out right at the start of the year. It's perfect for listening to as you walk around the city. I do this a lot. Not only is it a great record, the track 'This Momentary' spawned probably my favourite music video of the year (it's shot in Chernobyl): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkmZBuidJVY>

Nan: Album: Deftones - Diamond Eyes (Reprise) A dark, deep, sexy journey made all the more poignant by the tragic events that left bass player Chi Cheng in a coma. It's one of those albums you want everyone to hear, including your neighbours at 2am. I called it a journey, they called the police.



Tune: Katy Perry - Teenage Dream (Virgin) She tamed Russell Brand, got her boobs out for Elmo and made the best pop song of the year. What can't this girl do? I bet she can't do the Rubik's cube in 90 seconds, which incidentally Justin Beiber can (fact).

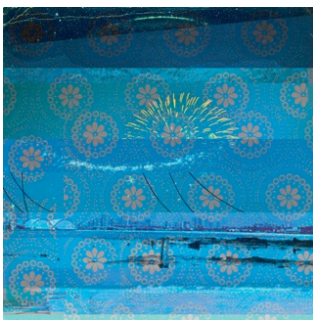
Alex K: Tune: Cee Lo - I Want You (Unreleased Demo Version) - check it on youtube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZY8g96fMgg> - ripped from a certain radio show, up to 145 000 hits]

Jez: Album: Wyatt/Atzmon/Stephens - For The Ghosts Within (Domino)
I'm proud to say that it was on Jazz On 3 that Robert Wyatt first heard the Israeli born saxophonist Gilad Atzmon. I connected them and a fruitful relationship has ensued. This album however is the high water mark of that collaboration. Robert Wyatt's own recordings have become increasingly political and sombre of late, though as brilliant as ever. Here though Robert immerses himself in the songbook of a nation whose musical legacy he loves and whose modern politics he loathes - America. Set against the warm string arrangements of Ros Stephen and twinned with Gilad's singing, soothing tenor Robert talks, whistles and sings his way through Lush Life, What a Wonderful world and Round Midnight. For jazz fans these are familiar songs but here they can be heard as if new. It's a moving, soothing album with trademark tinges of Wyatt melancholy. The perfect Xmas day morning album for all the family.



Tune: The Beatles - The Long And Winding Road - (Apple) - Well it was issued on I-Tunes for the first time) For some reason I've become increasingly obsessed with this song. It's a masterpiece. As a child I loved the Beatles. As a callow youth I became very cynical. In my 40s I've gone deeper in to their music. I saw Macca live again this Summer and was again in awe of his songwriting supremacy. Stick this one on your headphones now - top tune.

Dan Moss: Tune: Justin Bieber - U Smile (Nick Pittsinger Mix) (RCA) In a year that's been defined by acts of protest and defiance, I can think of no-one who has put it to the man more brilliantly than little-known producer Nick Pittsinger, who slowed down Justin Bieber's worst-ever song a whopping 800% to create this surprisingly staggering 35-minute epic.



Album: Gold Panda - Lucky Shiner (Notown) I have forsaken my own editorial opinion here and deferred to the power of maths. Now, if we are to believe him, glitch-merchant Gold Panda has more than 1000 of his own unreleased tracks sitting on his computer. For his debut LP, Derwin picked the eleven best of these and released them. A very simple calculation tells us that Lucky Shiner represents, at the very least, the top 1.1% percentile of all of his work. This, of course,

means that you're more likely to get struck by lightning or eaten by a shark than not fall hopelessly in love with this album.

Tom Green: Album: Arcade Fire - The Suburbs (Sonovox) Ever since I saw Arcade Fire's video for We Used To Wait - which uses Google Maps to implant the streets of your childhood into its drearily nostalgic treatment of youth, I've been unable to shake the feeling it was clearly designed to implant that the whole album is about my own childhood. Job done, Interactive Budget - it's now my record of the year.

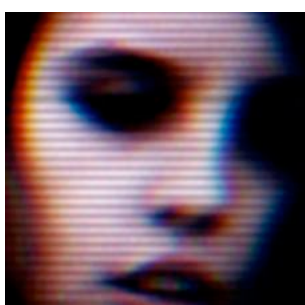
Tune: The XX - VCR (Four Tet remix) (Young Turks) I know the compiler of this list might dismiss the XX as (once) hipster tosh, but even Mr Collinson would not deny that with Keiran Hebden on the knobs for this remix they've delivered what must be among the best 8 minutes and 41 seconds of music of the year - it's haunting, subtle, and epic all at once.

David McGuire Album: The National - High Violet (Beggars) Quite simply divine, heart-wrenching, warm, up-lifting and substantial. Maybe because it's nearly Christmas but how can you not love this album - lovingly weaved together by one of the most under-rated Canadian ensembles ever...that includes Justin Bieber and his entourage. *[Cliche alert]* There isn't one weak song on this album. There really isn't. Anyone's Ghost, England, Vanderlyle



Crybaby Greeks, Sorrow, Bloodbuzz Ohio...(I could go on)...are all radio singles in their own right. This is their fifth studio album and their best by far. Go get a fake fur rug and some mulled wine, sit in-front of a roaring fire and listen to this album. It'll be worth it.

Tune: Kanye West – Monster (Roc-a-Fella) If you follow this guy on Twitter, it's obvious that he's mad. Officially. Any tune that contains the lyrics "Have you ever had sex with a Pharaoh? Aaaaah.....I put the p***y in a sarcophagus" qualifies his maddening, sex obsessed genius. But it's not only that, guests on the track include Jay-Z (who?), Rick Ross (standard), Bon Iver (w00t!!) and Nicki Minaj ("Bad bitch from Sri Lanka") plus ultimately, it's a got a great beat behind it. ZING!



Rowan: Tune: Crystal Castles Feat. Robert Smith – Not In Love (Fiction) In which the Toronto twosome – assumed to have undergone a humour and melody bypass whilst being surgically transplanted into their skintight black hipster wear - team up with Robert Smith - poster boy for doom and gloom - and create pop gold. Like 2010's other best tunes, Robyn's 'Dancing On My Own' and Hurts 'Stay' (both of which, could have equally shared this accolade), 'Not In Love' welds a mournful melody and melancholy lyrics to a driving synth line, but it's the almost trance-like rush to the chorus which lands the a killer blow. Ace.

Album: Beach House – Teen Dream (Bella Union) A certain Mr L. Thomas esq – formerly of this parish – described Beach House as sounding like "taking a ride on a broken down rollercoaster whilst over-dosing on calpol", which, frankly says it all. A wozy slice of dream pop, I lost count of the number of times Teen Dream soundtracked my London wandering. Underwhelming on first listen but getting under your skin with every subsequent play, 'Zebra', 'Walk In the Park' are the very definition of 'slow burning'. Wonderful.

Nicky: Album: Stornoway - Beachcomber's Windowsill (4AD) I'm not sure this Oxford band would have named their band Stornoway if they had actually been to the outer Hebridean town. I have, and you can't buy alcohol anywhere on a Sunday. Quite depressing if you are stuck in a tent in the pissing rain, when all you want is the pub round the corner to open so you can get make it all go away. Still the album is lovely, melancholic and was the perfect soundtrack to some of the more sad times I've had this year.



Track: Kidnap Alice – Jerusalem (Unsigned) Russell and I saw this band perform their first gig in a squat pub at the beginning of the year and I then

watched them take the festivals by storm. A bluegrass gospel hybrid with a singer who just booms out her vocals and gets everybody dancing. Jerusalem is their own song and although they've not done a proper recording of it....watch this space, they could be next years Mumfords.

Huw: Album: Tron Legacy OST (Virgin) Ok, so as a sit-down-and-listen-to-me album its not perfect. Like any OST there's a lot of filler & atmos that frankly should have stayed in the cinema. BUT any album with proper new Daft Punk material has to be considered for album of any year. 'Derezzed' and 'End Of The Line' are worthy of places on Discovery.



Tune: Nero You & Me - The most extravagant and exciting electronic tune of the year by one of the BBC's Sound of 2011 artists. Genre defying and genre defining.

Jonno: Album: Daft Punk - Tron Legacy OST (Virgin) Ask yourself this. Can Caribou, or Warpaint or any other frankly obvious choice for this category make you feel like a cyber hero, dressed head to toe in fluorescent Lycra, locked in a life or death battle of electro discuss with Jeff Bridges' evil CGI dopleganger whilst walking down Brixton High Street? No? That's why this stunning record is not only the best OST since Clint Mansell's Requiem for a Dream, but also the LP of the year.

Single: Pulled Apart By Horses - High Five, Swan Dive, Nose Dive (Transgressive) No other stand out single has brought such raw energy to the table. The Leeds lads sophomore single comes at you like a flying scissor kick to the head. It then lets you lick your wounds, before coming at you again, with a final, savage ending, this time with spiked golf shoes. If this song doesn't make you feel alive then you might be very much dead. I am from Leeds, I am biased.



Michael: Album: Jónsi 'Go' No more spooky rock weirdness for the Sigur Ros lead singer as he left behind his Scandinavian bandmates for an altogether more pop sound on his debut solo album. As epic as the Icelandic glaciers, 'Go' sounds like nothing else released this year, and at a concise nine tracks, never puts a foot wrong from start to finish. It's just a shame the only reason most people will have heard standout single 'Go Do' is because it featured on a Dulux advert :(

Track: Get Far feat. H.Boogie 'The Radio' A great big flop from Spring 2010, Italian dance producer Get Far brought together Estelle's younger sister H Boogie and a Sting sample on the year's most underrated club tune. Stuffed full of bagpipes and sat firmly on the right side of europop-cheese, 'The Radio'

was a brilliantly sad slice of boo-hoo disco-pop.

Dan: Album: J Roddy Walston & The Business - ' J Roddy Walston & The Business (Vagrant)

This Baltimore / Tennessee hybrid has been chipping away at the coalface of rock n' roll for the best part of ten years, but 2010 finally saw them signed to a major independent label and release their self-titled debut album. Punching the ears with driving piano, undercut with the purest rock n' roll guitar riffs and held together by lead singer Roddy's gravel melodies, this band is rightly described as AC/DC fronted by Jerry Lee Lewis. To see them live is to discover music all over again - keep your fingers crossed for a UK visit in 2011.



Sam: Tune: So there was a song going round this summer - I don't know if you heard it - but I really like it. It was by the guy from Gnarls Barkley and it's got lots of swearing in it... Seriously, I've been a big fan of Cee Lo's since working on FCUK FM way back in 2004. Back then he released 'Cee Lo Green is the Soul Machine' and Claire and I used to dance to at least two killer tracks from that album a day! Now he really is spoiling us with 'The Lady Killer' and the lead single 'F**K You'.

Jim: Tune: Foals - Spanish Sahara (Warners) When their debut album *Antidotes* hit the shelves in 2008, Foals unveiled an album destined to divide listeners. Gratuitously hyped by NME and the like, their first LP brimmed with promise but their math-influenced, chord-avoiding dance music was - as their sternest critics discerned - a little shallow. Revealed as a teaser for 2010's ridiculously titled *Total Life Forever*, 'Spanish Sahara' propelled Foals out of the indie rags and instantly made them Mercury Prize contenders. Initially subdued and vulnerable as Yannis's voice cracks over minimal guitar work, the track crescendos organically from haunting to triumphant with not a key change to be seen. Never has a song about finding a dead dog been so beautiful and (eventually) danceable.

Album: Oceansize - Self Preserved While The Bodies Float Up (Century)

Silver-fox-fronted noiseniks from Manchester present post-rock's answer to *In Rainbows* - but better. Cue calls of "Oh no he di-unt!" But, yeah, I went there. From start-to-finish, *Self Preserved...* is a masterpiece served up by one of Britain's most underrated bands; listen to 'Oscar Acceptance Speech' and prepare to weep at how untalented we all really are.

And that, friends is indeed that. Thanks to all who contributed – happy holiday listening to one and all. RC 24/12/10