

guitarist, and history raconteur Francis-Alfred Moerman.

Boyer plays with a style and sensibility rare for a teen; almost as if he's channeling the beauty of Moerman's own playing, which always stood apart from the pyrotechnics of so many Gypsy firebrands. Following in Moerman's footsteps, Boyer keeps alive the subtle and often introspective stylings of Baro, Sarane, and Matelo Ferret, who were in turn Moerman's inspirations.

Leské features just Boyer's guitar backed by his father, Sébastien Boyer, playing rhythm guitar and accordion. The sound is simple and pure, with a warmth throughout.

As stunning as Boyer's fretwork is, his wide-ranging songlist mostly eschews the overplayed classics of Gypsy jazz in favor of rare treats. Thus, Tchan Tchou's "La Gitane" waltz is balanced by Sarane Ferret's swinging "Sex Appeal." And in covering Django Reinhardt's waltz, "Montagne Sainte-Geneviève," Boyer adds variations on the theme, creating something new from the old. — MD



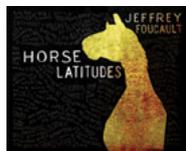
Tedeschi-Trucks Band Revelator

Sony Masterworks

The husband-and-wife team of Derek Trucks and Susan Tedeschi put their solo careers on hold while forming the 11-piece band that here uses the same basic ingredients, but changes the dynamic.

Trucks' previous group, The Derek Trucks Band, delved into many genres, with songs that often went 10 minutes or more. Tedeschi has always been a master of blues-based music, with tunes that are more succinct. *Revelator* is soul music. The songs are shorter, with great hooks, and not a whole lot of jamming. Yes, there are great slide solos from Trucks, but they're short and used in a traditional-pop way. Tedeschi holds down vocals, shining especially on the soul ballad "Don't Let Me Slide." Same goes for "These Walls" and "Until You Remember," both of which have great changes and soaring vocals, with slide guitar lending perfect foil for Tedeschi's vocals.

Trucks is one of the finest players of his generation. Couple that with the beauty and conciseness of this music, and it's a win-win situation. — JH



Jeffrey Foucault Horse Latitudes

Self-distributed

Jeffrey Foucault has a rock and roll voice and a folkie's state of mind. Sounding like a cross between Spider John Koerner and Willis Allan Ramsey with a pinch of Marc Cohen, his singing resonates in your chest.

On his latest album, Foucault presents

ample opportunity to enjoy the full scope of his vocal, instrumental, and songwriting prowess on 10 songs that occupy the spaces between heartbreak and memory. The opening/title cut has a languorous, floating quality to the rhythm that sways like a hammock in a breeze. Recorded in just three days, the album features the work of Van Dyke Parks on keyboards, Jennifer Condos on electric bass, Eric Heywood on pedal steel, baritone, and electric guitars, Billy Conway on drums, Kris Delmhorst on cello and vocals, and Foucault on acoustic guitar and lead vocals. Engineered and mixed principally by Ryan Freeland and mastered by Alex McClough, the disc has a certain lushness, bigness, and clarity one rarely hears from home-studio projects. — SS



Johnny Rawls Memphis Still Got Soul

Catfood Records

The grandson of a Mississippi-born blues guitarist, Rawls sharpened his skills as a player working for soul stalwarts Z.Z. Hill and Joe Tex, and was a member of the O.V. Wright Band.

With his latest solo album, *Memphis Still Got Soul*, Rawls remains a torchbearer for the music that has become all too thin — something he sings about in the title cut and in the voice that doesn't come around much anymore. Rawls guitar occupies the space somewhere between the rhythm and horn sections coming out for terse economical sorties ("Let Me Take You For A Ride") when the feeling is right. Perhaps because he is such a capable singer, Rawls knows how to stay out of his own way as a player. But he can put the ax out front ("My Guitar") to fine effect. As long as Johnny Rawls keeps a place to hang his hat within the city limits, this album's title is more than just a statement — it's a sweet truth. — RA



Marillion Live from Cadogan Hall

Eagle

When Genesis went pop with "Follow You, Follow Me" in 1978, they inadvertently hatched a new genre that split pop and prog down the middle. One of the direct — and most successful — progeny of that moment was Marillion, a British band that began recording in the '80s.

Available on CD and DVD, its new *Live from Cadogan Hall* was recorded on the band's 2009 tour and deftly captures the band's penchant for elegant melodies, thick synth strings, and the lilting guitar work of Steve Hogarth. With the charismatic Steve Hogarth on vocals, the group takes electric songs from its catalog and arranges them into fresh acoustic versions. The combination of acoustic guitar, keyboards, and the always-superb bass work of Pete Trewavas is compelling,

as heard in "Out of This World" and "The Space." Rothery grabs his electric for the gentle leads in "Wrapped Up in Time." If you have a soft spot for the dramatic, pensive pop of the Moody Blues, Peter Gabriel, and mid-period Genesis, it's hard to resist Marillion's charms. It's enchanting stuff. — PP



The Bordertown Bootleggers Western Swing Band

Tone Poet Productions

Chances are, if you put an all-star band together to play Western swing, things are going to work. Such is the case with the Bordertown Bootleggers.

The motivating force behind this one is jazz guitarist Jake Langley, aided by Cindy Cashdollar on steel and dobro, Floyd Domino on piano, Danny Levin on fiddle, as well as guests Ray Benson and Rick Mcrae on guitar, and Joel Guzman on accordion.

The Langley-written opener, "Minor Imposition," makes it obvious this is going to be a fun ride. A minor-key swinger, great unison playing states the melody before a round of solos; Langley, Cashdollar, and Levin all shine, with Langley running down the changes with jazzy agility that culminates in a delightful descending run.

"String Theory" is another Langley original; a walking blues, it has a textbook bluesy-jazz solo. A take on the Hoagy Carmichael classic "Skylark" shows lovely ballad work from Langley before Cashdollar joins with lovely, melodic solo. — JH



Too Slim and the Taildraggers Shiver

Self-distributed

Leading off with "Stoned Again" — a sort of "Rollin' and Tumblin'" meets "Are You Ready For The Country?" — Tim "Too Slim" Langford's new album proves he is still a worthy torchbearer for blues-based rock.

Langford slides into "Daddy's Bones" and "Can't Get Enough" (another nod to Neil Young) establishing the spot-on pacing displayed throughout the album. Langford has the ability to amalgamate several guitar styles, yet he is very much his own man. If it's possible to be a natural-born guitarist, Langford fits the description. With the rock-solid Taildraggers (bassist and second vocalist Polly O'Keary and drummer Tommy Cook) Langford used a tried-and-true formula; he writes good songs and the band plays the heck out of them. Sounds simple, but it's surprising how many blues and blues-type bands ignore the material, and how many singer/songwriters think it's a sin to get their

audience's rumps shaking. Too Slim and the Taildraggers know better. — RA



Steve Earle

I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive

New West Records

Steve Earle's first record of original material in more than four years offers songs that are concise, with lyrics and music that are catchy.

Acoustic guitar and mandolin highlight most of this effort, and while Earle has never been avant-garde, it has been awhile since he offered tunes this accessible — perhaps because of producer T-Bone Burnett or various other musical influences.

There's plenty of traditional country here, as exemplified on the mandolin-fiddle tune "Little Emperor," or "Molly-O," with its almost European folk-tale sound, while "Waitin' on the Sky" has a chugging pop-country feel. Earle's nods to folk music include "God is God" and "I Am a Wanderer," with its astonishingly lovely melody.

Lyrical, Earle deals often with life and death, so it's no surprise that his first novel (of the same name) is being released simultaneously. He has never been content in one medium, and the book imagines the life of Doc Ebersole as he's haunted by the ghost of his former friend, Hank Williams. It's an amazing tale and proves Earle is a duly capable storyteller in long form. — JH

YANK RACHELL



BLUES MANDOLIN MAN

Yank Rachell Blues Mandolin Man

Blind Pig

Though Chicago blues guitarist Johnny Young doubled on mandolin, James "Yank" Rachell was one of the few who specialized in blues mandolin.

He co-led a jug band with Sleepy John Estes in 1929 and '30, and recorded with Sonny Boy Williamson I (John Lee Williamson) in the late '30s. When he retired from music in '58, he hadn't recorded in 17 years. Thankfully, he came back in '63 and recorded *Mandolin Blues*, with old cohorts Estes and Hammie Nixon (on jug and harmonica), along with the great Big Joe Williams and his young sideman, Mike Bloomfield.

Rachell continued to perform until his death at the age of 87, in 1997, at which point the blues lost one of its last links to the jug-band era. In addition to co-writing "She Caught The Katy" with Taj Mahal, he was featured in Terry Zwigoff's documentary about Howard Armstrong, *Louie Bluie*, and recorded with John Sebastian's J-Band.

This album, previously released in '86, finds Yank in fine form — vocally and on mandolin (now electrified) — backed by producer Peter Roller on acoustic,