

## [compact capsules]

**Caitlin Rose**

*Own Side Now*  
Theory 8 Records

She writes and write songs like an old soul, yet, Nashville-based Caitlin Rose is just barely into her 20s. She tantalized folks with her lyricism and big voice on her debut EP (Dead Flowers, 2009) where she was equally at home be it singing tough or tender. Now along comes her full-length debut called *Own Side Now* on which she combines that fetching and versatile voice with lived-in songs running the emotional gamut to deliver a take-notice performance primed to perk ears. Highly recommended. Visit [www.thecaitlinrose.com](http://www.thecaitlinrose.com). - Dan Ferguson

**Black Joe Lewis & The Honeybears**

*Scandalous*  
Lost Highway Records

It begins with a funky ass-shaker brimming with punchy horns and all, before segueing into a down and dirty dose of Mississippi Hill Country-styled grind and bump blues. That opening couplet sets the stage for *Scandalous*, the sophomore offering of righteous and old school soul and R&B from Austin-based powder keg Black Joe Lewis & The Honeybears. Equal parts Detroit, Memphis, and Mississippi Delta, Lewis and his Honeybears deliver the juke joint goods in force-of-nature fashion on this serious party starter of a record. Visit [www.blackjoelewis.com](http://www.blackjoelewis.com). - Dan Ferguson

**Various Artists**

*No One Got Hurt: Bloodshot Records' 15th Anniversary @ The Hideout*  
Bloodshot Records

A special 2011 Record Store Day release (and still available), the live compilation *No One Got Hurt* from Bloodshot Records takes the listener front and center to a 15 year anniversary party for the venerable indie as captured at a favorite Bloodshot venue, The Hideout in Chicago. The collection trots out many of Bloodshot's best including Alejandro Escovedo, Deadstring Brothers, Jon Langford & Sally Timms (of Mekons' fame), Scott H. Biram, and label mainstay The Waco Brothers. Visit [www.bloodshotrecords.com](http://www.bloodshotrecords.com). - Dan Ferguson

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## [in the groove]

**Billy Mitchell's Wit Shines w/ 'Detour'**

In the current musical climate we find ourselves, it's rare that the singer-songwriter forward any commentary on the world around them, outside of their own little cocoon of pain. Who loved them? Who left them? Who hurt them? - WHO CARES?!!!

Yes, we all understand that you're hopelessly sardonic from the scars left by mom demanding you clean your own room after the age of 22. However, some of us may remember a far less self-absorbed time, when writers had a world vision and a profound curiosity which led them to opine on matters relating far beyond their own hometowns. Songs were weapons of change. And this all-encompassing power was neither

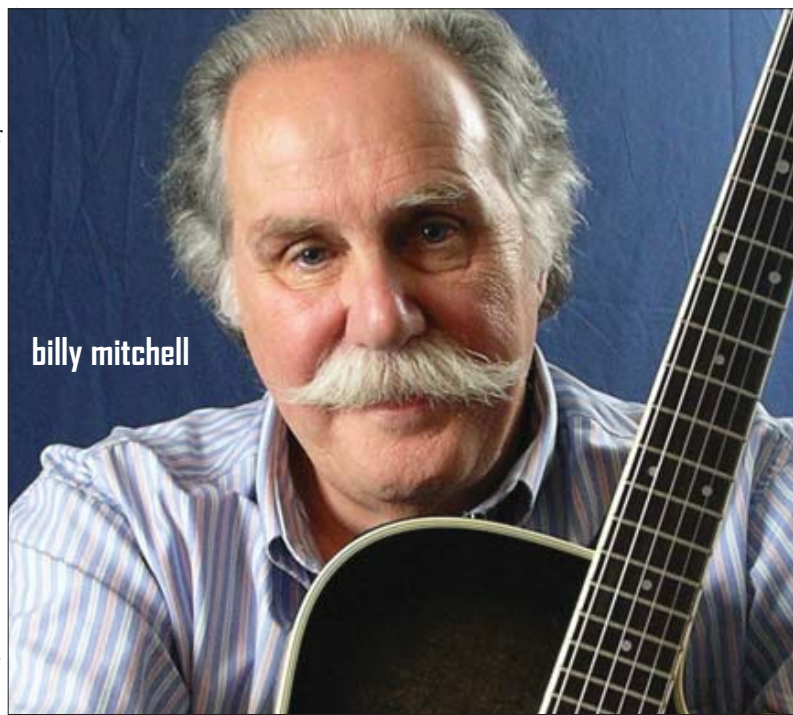


Don  
DiMuccio

lost on society nor the so-called establishment, whose influence was waning at an alarming rate.

Some socially-conscious poets and songwriters took what Dylan once called a "finger pointing" approach to their narrative. Often addressing the problems head on, and calling out the evils as they saw them, artists like Phil Ochs and more recently Eddie Vedder sang of the inane and the unjust alike. But for others, a more subtle tool was used for their point making - SATIRE. Only incisive listeners with nimble minds can look past the humor and irony in songs like Randy Newman's "Short People" or Merle Haggards "Okie From Muskogee," or even the widely misinterpreted "Sweet Home Alabama" to comprehend the author's true intentions of meaning. And it's in this tradition of satirical, thought-provoking writing that hail's Rhode Island's own Billy Mitchell.

Hailed as West Kingston's answer to Jimmy Buffet, Billy Mitchell has been in the singer-songwriter circuit for more than 30 years. A self-described "unabashed Boomer," Mitchell delivers a brand of social comment that plays as well in intimate live settings as it does on his latest CD offering *Detour*. Each track's narrative



billy mitchell

reveals his satirical and sometimes sarcastic look at modern pop culture, and the state of the world as a whole. But don't get me wrong, these songs are not meant to be deep mini manifestos. Rather, Billy Mitchell's strength is his folksy everyman delivery, with a lean toward the sort of irreverence found in writers like Ray Stevens.

The discs opening track "Says Who" is a shining example of Mitchell brand of social comment. Questioning the current trend of ubiquitous 24/7 news cycles and instant cyber-info, he asks the rhetorical question that just about everyone over 40 has inquired at one time or another. "A conflagration of information coming at us in every way - We've been blessed with experts and gurus to break it down, turn it all around, and find the news that we can use...Says Who?"

Another highlight on the disc is "Prescription Drugs" a humorous yet scathing look at the rackets known respectfully as the pharmaceutical and medical insurance industries, "I took my restless legs to the HMO today...the man in white said empty out your pockets for your pills today - For a sex life that ain't nice, there's a little blue pill that screws you twice...gram for gram more expensive than any

weed."

*Detour* also includes a heapin' helpin' dose of local color, best appreciated by those who call Rhode Island home. Tracks like "Diva of the Silver Top Diner" and "I Know A Guy" illustrates the unique lifestyle us Ocean Staters have grown accustomed to. "How about a nice state job, with a pension big and fat? Or maybe a low numbered license plate, now we can deal with that... I Know A Guy."

As great as *Detour* is, I have a feeling I'll need to head down to the Courthouse Center or the Brooklyn Tea House to get a real feel for Billy Mitchell's unique take on the time honored tradition of connecting with an audience through song. Whether lampooning pop culture or lamenting the conditions of healthcare, Billy Mitchell leaves the listener with something to think about. And that is the true goal of any singer/songwriter worth his weight in guitar strings.

**Billy Mitchell releases *Detour* at the RI Songwriters Association Songwriter Showcase at Lily Pads 27 North Road, Peacedale on Saturday, Oct 22, 7:30pm. For more info hop onto [www.musicalilypads.org](http://www.musicalilypads.org)**