

Albums of the Year 2018 : The Top 25

[Ged Babey](#) 9 December, 2018

As voted for by 30 of our writers, here are the Top 25 Albums of 2018.

The Number One received more than twice the votes as the second place. The next ten were hotly contested with the narrowest of margins, and the rest got the same number of votes -so are in random order to be frank. But... Every one is a winner! 2018 was a great year for music and the Number 1 is no surprise...

ONE

IDLES Joy As An Act of Resistance (Partisan)

Punk Rock reinvented and not wearing a mask of masculinity or yoke of tradition, but a wicked smile and its broken heart exposed but still beating in its chest. Punk rock which instead of calling for Anarchy and saying I Don't Care is shouting UNITY! and LOVE IS ALL. *Reviewed [here](#) by Ged Babey*

IDLES - DANNY NEDELKO



TWO

The Blinders Columbia ([Modern Sky](#))

This power trio, this band of very modern troubadours, this enlightened youth, deliver an album so explosive, so perfect, it defies any attempt at categorisation. There are odd time signatures, indefinite song structures but the tracks ebb and flow beautifully. Columbia as an album is a single piece of art as a concept. Listen, track by track, join up the dots, get the message loud and clear – England is indeed dreaming. *Reviewed [here](#) by Nigel Carr*

The Blinders - L'etat C'est Moi [Music Video]



THREE

ILL : We Are ILL (Box Records)

All-woman five-piece... currently based in Manchester, who highlight that quality music does not have to mean an emulation of that which has gone before. This is acidly fresh, it gets under your skin and stings: the type of music which fizzes with energy...taking chunks out of the patriarchy... wonky pop with a raw, resonant edge... Music which makes a point, and makes it in the sharpest, most stunning sense.... 'We Are ILL' isn't just expression, it's an angry articulation – and a triumph, *Said Emily Oldfield [here](#).*

ILL "ILL SONG"



FOUR

Cabbage : Nihilistic Glamour Shots

Yeah, yeah, yeah Louder Than War favourites... The dirty side of Greater Manchester has reared its ugly head with this band of misfits who don't want to conform to the colour by numbers indie state of the norm we have had for years. Cruising away from the Manc swagger of the you know who's they ramp up the odds with a dirty sound that still captures the anthems inbetween the mess of lovely noise. *Said Wayne Carey [here](#), back in March.*

Cabbage - Postmodernist Caligula (Official Video)



FIVE

Liines : Stop-Start (Reckless Yes)

From the outset Stop-Start grabs the listener by the scruff of the neck and demands attention, there's no hanging about while they slowly introduce you to their work, no, it starts like a pistol and doesn't let up. At all.

Everything is immediate, don't even bother trying to catch a breath during this aural assault as it'll be snatched away from you every time. (*reviewed [here](#) by Amy Tweddle*)

Cold [Single] | LIINES



SIX

Gazelle Twin : Pastoral (Anti-Ghost Moon Records)

What Pastoral uses as its musical palette is a vital blending of techno torment and traditional folk instruments which are often buried within the mix so when they do catch your ear the effect is highly unsettling.... It is an uneasy listen for uneasy times. It is rage and fury, history and present. A lesson, a sermon, and a plea. Pastoral is not only the album we could have wished for, but it is also the album the whole country deserves. *Reviewed [here](#) by Simon Tucker.*

Gazelle Twin - Hobby Horse (official video)



SEVEN

Nine Inch Nails : Bad Witch

John Robb said [here](#) : This is a varied and engrossing adventure. A trip into the compulsive heart of darkness and a landmark release in a year that is a challenge for any musicians to soundtrack.

Nine Inch Nails - God Break Down The Door



EIGHT

The Lovely Eggs : This is Egglan

Lovely Eggs have without doubt created one of the stand out albums of 2018; the antidote to the utter dross clogging up the radio stations; these are giant climactic songs, complete with arching melodies and born bad bass that rattles in your chest – its only two months in, but This Is Egglan really is that good. *Said Phil Newall [here](#)*

Wiggy Giggy- The Lovely Eggs



NINE

Goat Girl – Goat Girl (Rough Trade)

Goat Girl's songs are short, sharp and occasionally to the point. They often have no point, which kind of *is* the point. They're wonky, warped and woozy, languid laconic and lethargic. They sound as if they first picked up their instruments last week, which is a hard trick to carry off when you're as musically proficient as they actually are. *Reviewed [here](#) by Tim Cooper*

Goat Girl - The Man



TEN

Suede – the Blue Hour (Warner Music)

Expansive and ambitious, sprawling but reassuringly familiar, The Blue Hour is the work of a band who are comfortable in their middle-aged skins but have never lost the joie de vivre of their younger selves. *Says Tim Cooper in his [review](#),*

Suede - Life Is Golden (Official Video)



11

Beak> >>>

...an album where the three players are playing for their lives. The instrumentation is louder, brasher and more clear cut. Vocals are more decipherable (for Beak> anyway) and the production enlarges every emotion. It is powerful and pristine. It is swampy and divine. The fog has lifted and what a vision we have been gifted. *Reviewed [here](#) by Simon Tucker*

Beak> - Brean Down



12 Low: Double Negative

It's the sound of an edgeland, of fear and uncertainty, constant distortion of fact, and relentless end-times mania. *William Doyle said [reviewing in the Quietus](#)*

Low - Double Negative Triptych "Quorum", "Dancing and Blood" and "...



13

Adwaith: Melyn (Libertino Records)

Melyn isn't another Welsh language album. It is Wales herself. It is its foreboding skylines and invisible drizzle. It is its beautiful summer mornings and its life bringing rivers. It is fierce and proud. It is strong and vulnerable. Melyn is welcoming, warm, sarcastic and funny... Melyn is also the voice of the youth of Wales ... Melyn is one of the best debut albums by ANY band of recent memory and demands attention not only from those who reside here in Wales but those who live over the bridge. *Said Simon Tucker [here](#)*

Adwaith - Fel i Fod



14

Flux Capacitors : Courtesan

Against all the odds, despite breaking every rule in the book, even though they are weird, wired, loopy, mis-matched, wonky and strange – this is probably the best combination of wit, poetry, surf-punk, feminine post-punk blues and existential angst with added sarcasm and feedback that you will hear, this or any year. *Said Ged Babey [here](#).*

Satan by The Flux Capacitors



15

Evil Blizzard : The Worst Show On Earth

...they glam up in their weird costumes and masks, play fucked up bass driven tunes and just wanna rock like fuck for their own pleasure and our displeasure. They write great tunes that worm their way into your head and batter your senses. It's all about the stomp rock that drags you in. Another album of the year by a mile! *Said the shy and retiring Wayne Carey [here](#) back in May.*

Hello



16

La Luz : Floating Features

... the whole album is a joy. Perfect in every way, from every angle, at any time of day, rain or shine, but possibly at its best speeding down a highway at night, high as a kite, heartbroken into little pieces, being chased by nightmarish creatures with the body of a lizard and the head of your ex. Phantasmagorical and just plain fantastic. (*Ged Babey reviewed [here](#)*)

La Luz - "Mean Dream" [OFFICIAL VIDEO]



17 Anna Von Hauswolff : Dead Magic

... 5 tracks that takes the Swans magnificent trip deeper into the heart of darkness but never loses sight of the melodic touch that has been part of her DNA from the start. This is a thrilling artful spooked and dangerous sound. Swirling songs build around a huge drone with all the dark colours of palette painted into a perfection. Never has an organ sounded damn dark and the deep shuddering notes sounded so gothic providing a foundation for her swooping voice. [*John Robb said in February*](#)

Anna von Hausswolff - 'The Mysterious Vanishing of Electra' (Officia...



18 Courtney Barnett : Tell Me How You Really Feel

...takes us into more new territory. It's heavier and more musically diverse, but the most notable difference is that where once she half-spoke her stories of everyday events and irritations, now she's singing them. Apart from that, it's exactly what we want... a set of reflective songs about the people closest to her and the struggles they were facing. Or, as she puts it: "Communication, vulnerability, and a whole lot of general human behavioral traits." *Review by Tim Cooper [here](#).*

Courtney Barnett - Charity



19 Parquet Courts : Wide Awake!

... it's also their most groundbreaking. It's an album about independence and individuality but also about collectivity and communitarianism. Love is at its centre. ambitious, diverse, one of those 'you can't pigeonhole' bands that keep on amazing me. Probably their most accessible effort to date. *Said Wayne Carey [here](#).*

Parquet Courts - Wide Awake (Official Video)



20 The Rising – Are You Ready To Fly (Detour)

The Rising sound familiar, but they are brand new. They sound ‘old-fashioned’, but they are modern, they are Now! They are the blokes down the pub with a thousand stories and jokes but against all the odds they have produced a classic album of British working class pop music. Thoroughly modern modernist pop. *Said Ged Babey [here](#).*

The Rising - Are You Ready To Fly?



21 Fur Dixon – Return 2 Sender ([Wtfukushima](#))

Return 2 Sender is the sound of jubilant celebration and impassioned longing. The album switching seamlessly between full-on surf/garage rock'n'roll stompers and smouldering torch songs., while Fur's range allows her angelic vocals to shine and soar... *said Neil Hodge [here](#).*

Fur Dixon's WTFUKUSHIMA!! – Cod'ine



22 Heavy Drapes – Crashing Like Stars (Tarbeach Recordings)

If you haven't heard this band before, and you like "in your face" music, with both UK first wave punk and the New York scene influences, but brought right into the 21st Century.... a band that plays with a passionate intensity and a frontman who really means it, man. If you like an album with plenty of anthemic, sing-a-long tunes... This album is for you. *Reviewed by Neil Hodge [here](#)*

Heavy Drapes - Crashing Like Stars



23 Laibach – the Sound of Music (Mute)

The Sound of Music was conceived when Laibach were infamously invited to perform in North Korea in 2015. The band performed several songs from the 1965 film's soundtrack at the concert in Pyongyang, chosen by Laibach as it's a well-known and beloved film in the DPRK and often used by schoolchildren to learn English. The album gives the Laibach treatment to tracks such as 'My Favorite Things', 'Edelweiss' and 'Maria', here reworked as 'Maria / Korea' ("How do you solve a problem like Maria / Korea?").

Laibach - My Favorite Things (Official Video)



24

Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs – King Of Cowards (Rocket Recordings)

The Iggy-esque drive to dementia, Sabbath-esque squalor and Motörhead-style dirt may still be present and correct yet the songs are leaner, the long-drawn-out riff-fests sharpened into addictive hammer blows and the nihilistic dirges of yore alchemically transformed into an uplifting and inviting barrage of hedonistic abandon. *Said Ioan [here](#)*

Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs Pigs - GNT



25

Carol Hodge: Hold On to That Flame (Chopback)

Carol Hodge is just a wonderful, skilled songwriter and soulful singer par excellence – she should be a massive fucking star. (And not just at a ‘cult’ level....) This is a soulful, soul-baring, compassionate and passionate collection of songs. This album needs to be heard far and wide. *Reviewed [here](#) by Ged Babey*

Carol Hodge - Fallibility (OFFICIAL VIDEO)



26 – 50 are [here](#)

51 -200 [here](#)

Compiled by Ged Babey from votes from John Robb, Nigel Carr, Mike Ainscoe, Neil Hodge, Gus Ironside, Paul Scott Bates, Simon Tucker, Matt Mead, Cassie Fox, Ian Canty, Nathan Brown, Tim Cooper, Arash Torabi Hal Incandenza, Christopher Lloyd, Melanie Smith, Keith Goldhanger, Neil Johnson, Nathan Whittle, John Kean, Wayne Carey, Ged Babey, Mark Ray, Paul Grace, Emily Oldfield, Phil Newall, Dom Wals, Cazz Blasé, Naomi Dryden-Smith and Ioan Humphreys.