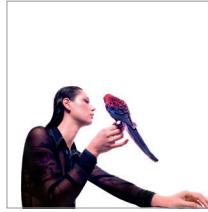


*Album Of The Month:**Storm Queen*

by Grace Cummings



If your ears are starved for an intimate heart-to-heart in the form of a music record, artist Grace Cummings' latest effort is just what you need. Despite its somewhat ominous title, there's not much tempestuous or imposing about it. A beautifully stripped down and personal album headed by Cummings' husky, muscular vocals, it really does feel like a much longed-for conversation with a dear old friend over a whiskey in a dimly lit pub.

The music itself is an affecting mixture of bluesy acoustic guitar, Irish folk-inspired fiddle and expressive piano, embellished with the occasional quiet chuckle or audible sigh from Cummings, making it that much more familiar and special. It's also remarkably timeless; "Heaven" sounds like a recording from a rousing Sixties peace protest, while the gentle "Always New Days Always" could easily be seen as a homage to Vashti Bunyan's cult 1970 record, *Just Another Diamond Day*.

But while the music may sound nostalgically familiar, Cummings' commanding vocals are anything but conventional. They're the true storyteller on this record, deftly slipping and swerving from note to note, from the highest shrieks to the most rumbling of growls. She doesn't just follow established patterns—she creates her own. A formidable artist whose heart clearly burns for the comforting grit of classic folk, we're dreaming of the day we get to see her live. Until then, we'll keep this record on repeat.

 by Eva Mackevic
*Grace Cummings Recommends...**Laser Guided Melodies*

by Spiritualized



I always come back to this album. The first time I heard it was like it was made for my ears only; a little secret written just for me that encapsulated everything that was swimming around in my head. A lullaby just for me. "Spaceman" is classic Sinatra, a bed time melody and a symphony all at once.

"Shine a Light" is a song that "formed" me a bit, I suppose, as a musician... It starts from nowhere and builds up and up to a rip-out-your-heart-out kind of catastrophe. It's magnificent. That's what life is like, I think. When I hear it in music it all just starts making a lot of sense to me.