

back to full reviewing-mode,  
and suggesting what **you**  
should be checking out

check out the playlists full  
of **chinese music** talent  
we've got **just for you.**

**in this yam we review //**  
**inglourious basterds, mother,**  
**honokaa boy, treeless mountain,**  
**g-dragon, backstreet boys,**  
**imogen heap, glee, juri ueno**  
**and more //**

**just an idiot-noise**

**fandoms and idols,  
to idolize or  
not to idolize?  
that is the question//**



She was willing to kick ass on her cover story, and we worked on her article for at least month and a half. Plus, she's worked hard on reviewing stuff for us, and she's become quite the expert on talking about albums thanks to her gigs.

Maca is also back, because her classes have started and she loves procrastinating the best. She isn't willing to verbally-abuse some of those movies... yet – but I will get her one day.

Moreover, Susan from **more c\_music** has also joined **yam**

for this issue with two great playlists with Chinese music. She's got a broad taste in music, so be sure to check out those tracks.

For anything else, I'm always looking for reviewers because writers bail on me all the time, so for any comments or ideas: [amy@amy-wong.com](mailto:amy@amy-wong.com)

[amywong](#) //

p.s.: where is everyone?

We're dropping like flies here in **yam** headquarters, since most contributors seem busy. Lucky for me, **julz** saved the day.

[from the editor //](#)

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# inglourious basterds

The Inglourious Basterds are the super secret group of Jewish-American soldiers sent to occupied-France to kill and scare the freaking Nazis. And as Lt. Aldo Raine points out, *they ain't in the prisoner-takin' business; they're in the killin' Nazi business. And cousin, business is a-boomin'...* so expect a bit of bloodshed and some more killing, after all – this is a Tarantino film.

From the first scene to the very last, you're in for a thrill ride, which is no small feature when you have an idea where the film might be going, but you end up all the more satisfied when it does happen. From the crude and unsophisticated Lt. Raine, to the suave and educated but vicious Col. Landa – a glass of milk has never been more threatening.

The film blurs the lines of good guys and bad guys, whereas in most Nazi-themed films you see them performing the most horrendous acts until the good guys arrive, in Basterds you'll see the so-called good guys doing all the beating and killing, while most Nazis beg for their lives.

Filled with dark humor, irony and violence, the film is not for those easily-offended fellas. For the rest? You gotta watch this. No, really. Stop wasting your money on so much crap. - amy

★★★★☆



# honokaa boy

Honokaa Boy tells the story of a boy – Okay, a young man – who ends up living in the small Hawaiian city of Honokaa, after he mysteriously falls in love with the place during a failed trip with his girlfriend. In there, he meets a bunch of quirky people that are very likable, who end up having an impact on his life.

One of the persons he meets is an old woman who lives alone – a widow for the past 50 years, and is a great cook. One day, he leaves a bag of flour at her place, and she suddenly invites him back for a home-cooked meal, which he couldn't possibly resist since he is living off instant noodles. After that incident, a friendship starts.

The pacing of the film is slow, as it is in many Japanese films, and it has a simple premise. Most of the weight falls onto the characters themselves. Leo (Masaki Okada) is a perfectly charismatic guy, while Bee-san (Chieko Baisho) plays a perfect counterpart – Keiko Matsuzaka was also great – but what made the film is the platonic relationship between Leo and Bee-san who are ages apart in years. Bee-san even tries to make herself pretty with a trip to the beauty shop, and a brand new bright-colored dress.

However, as any relationship must suffer, theirs is threaten by Mariah (Jun Hasegawa), a young woman working at a local store. Leo seems interested in her, and why shouldn't he? She's attractive, he's attractive. They're both young.

The only thing I have to complain is Hasegawa's performance that seemed flat and out of touch with the whole feeling of the film. Her line delivery was even worse in her perfect English, than it was in Japanese. - amy

★★★¼☆





# mother

Joon-ho Bong turns what could have been a wrist-cutting-tear-jerking drama like Mother into a surprisingly good thriller, in which a mother's love can be capable of many things.

Do-jun (Won Bin) is a 20-something year old guy with some mental problems, lives with his mother (Hye-ja Kim) and hangs out with the wrong crowd, namely Jin-tae (Jin Ku) who often blames him for things he's done. Things take the wrong turn when Do-jun becomes the main suspect in the murder of a teenage girl, and his mother must do whatever it takes to prove he is innocent.

Kim has, by far, one of the best female performances this year, and her performance is only highlighted by the story, which keeps you guessing on what's going to happen next.

It is almost heartbreaking to see her struggle with the slacking police investigation, and a lawyer that seems more interested with his leisure activities than her son's case. And it is particularly shocking when Do-jun reveals he's remembered something about his childhood, and we see it all play out on screen. The same can be said about one of the last scenes, in which the mother realizes what's going to happen next.

No wonder Korea decided to choose this film to represent the country in the next Academy Awards, which will hopefully point the spotlight back to Asian filmmaking - amy

★★★★☆

# treeless mountain

Treeless Mountain is the heartbreaking story of two girls, 6-year-old Jin (Hee-yeon Kim) and her little sister Bin (Song-hee Kim) who were living in Seoul with their mom, until the day she tells them that they must go to their aunt's place. In there, she tells them they must stay because mom has to go find dad. However, before leaving she also gives them a little plastic piggy bank, and tells them that when they fill up the piggy with coins, she'll be back.

With innocence, like any normal kids, they believe and spend their days living with an aunt that doesn't seem to want them there. You see them struggle, until Jin begins the realization that nobody really wants them... until the end of the film, which is the saddest realization a 6-year-old could have.

If you have small kids in your family, you'll want to hug them forever and never let them get hurt. And if you get the kids in your family to watch this, they'll probably appreciate you even more as a parent, or guardian. Of course, you might want to hold off on sad realities until they're old enough not to grow up depressed. - amy

★★★½☆





# down the idol-hole from teeny-bop mags, fanzines to 24/7 updates

Main Entry: idol-ize  
Inflected Form(s): idol-ized; idol-iz-ing  
Date: 1598  
*transitive verb* : to worship as a god;  
*broadly*: to love or admire to excess



There is no doubt that fandom is one of the world's most organized and loyal social gatherings ever. If there is something in form of music, books, films or television; there is always someone that loves and adores that genre with an enormous passion. There is always something to be admired and fans are born.

I believe that being a fan back in the day must have been easier than it is today. Back then, you had to wait for the weekly or sometimes monthly release of a teeny-bop magazine, some random concert or the opportunity to see them in a TV show.

As a fan one could express their love while doing fanzines, chasing after trading cards or listening to the same single over and over again on a record player. Today, we have the Internet, information is spread worldwide with the click of a finger and stars are much more available to fans. Everyday fans can follow their idol's activities, gore over new pictures and seeing as many idols today use Twitter, fans get to know what the idols are up to every minute of the day. Fans can download new releases through iTunes, there is always a torrent with something fans need to see or listen to.

Besides that, there is the presence of forums. Today everyone and their dog has an opinion about everything, fandom has gone from being held in private homes among friends, to be splashed everywhere and shared with millions of people. This always leads to heated discussions about who is the better fan and who knows the most. There is always a wanker ready to express their sometimes stupid ideas. Now, fans can express their love to their idols by creating their own written world where their idols are the heroes; to videos where they showcase their idols' better qualities. The Internet has created a world of fandom that is immense, innovative and humongous.

## Falling down the idol-hole

With the birth of the Internet a new way of sharing and expressing information was born. When it came to idols and their fans; a platform was built for idols to gain more fans and for fans to be able to have more access to their idols. Today, as a star, there is an enormous audience waiting to see what you have to offer. The term “the world is your oyster” has literary become a reality with platforms such as YouTube and MySpace. When more and more people spend their time online, browsing through new uploaded videos or just reading what other people say about anything; to find yourself hooked to something in form of music, film or whatever nonsense there is out there, is not that hard.



There is no doubt that fans become fans for a reason. Be it that a musician is very cute or sings lovely songs; to an action star that is the epitome of a “manly” man. Gradually, fans start to find great comfort in the idols they love, they are a source of happiness and are often what fans dream of having in a partner/best friend. Then, with 24/7 exposure to them, it is not hard to find more and more of something “unique” that appeals to them. The idols become as natural to fans seeing as they are always inside their computers. As fans search for more about the idols, they meet others that share the same passions in forums, blogs, and communities. To be able to find a friend that shares your opinions is not hard.

Fans share stories, hopes and fantasies. Fans read what others have written about them, fanfics appear, fanvids are everywhere. There is always something to discuss about (be it as minimal as what the idol wore around his neck), and someone to discuss it with. Fans are never alone in their idol-love and that can be a great, until something clouds a fan's spazz parade.

## When too much becomes a burden

In being able to always vent your feelings and desires, fans walk down a path where the reality and fantasy is blurred. Seeing as fans are constantly shoved new information about their beloved idols; fans start to see them as a part of themselves, they get to know all about them and fans grow the sense that they can understand them. A sense of familiarity is grown from this overexposure, they become experts on their idols facial expressions judging from a single paparazzi photo, and they understand that they are having a bad day from an interview.

When there are so many different outlets of media to analyze, the fan is not far from becoming a bit obsessed. The idols become like friends, fans feel connected seeing as today more than never, idols get in touch with their fans through uploaded video greetings or statements put on fan-forums. And when something becomes so personal to us, there is really no difficulty in starting to hate what we love. It takes a mere photo taken on a wrong angle, the strong opinion of an anonymous Internet persona or the fact that you wish for something to occur in a certain way and the opposite is the outcome. When rumors, speculations and

the random “fan-account” are splashed on your screen is when the dream can become a nightmare.

We are enamored with what we see through the safety of our screen, we are forced to make our own conclusions about what we see and therefore make up a picture that is perfect for us but, most of the time, so far from the truth. We let ourselves pour so much emotion and hope into the idol persona being presented to us that when our needs are not met, that is when affection often turns into despise.

Nowadays, opinions are changed as fast as a new update is made. We are not safe from what others say about a certain matter, therefore, nor are our feelings safe, we are prone to be swept away by illicit comments and believe them to be true. Adding fuel to the fire in the fast pace in which information is shared, one second is something good, then you update five seconds later and it has become something bad. We are unable to control the information given to us and how it is delivered. A fan is always dependent on others when it comes to information, a malicious circle of rumors and speculations is never far away.





**Who pays the bigger price?**

In this day and age idols have become as easy as fast food. The entertainment industry is one that is always evolving, there is always someone new to adore and idolize; and when that becomes tiresome or it looses its “bedazzle” one can always find something new in the menu. In other words, fans have now more power then ever, seeing as they can make or break an idol depending on what said idols does or doesn't. This leads to idols being cautious in how they present themselves and how much they decide to show. Idols need fans to be able to become idols, fans are the ones buying the idol's merchandise, seeing the idol's movie or going to the idol's concert.

This arises the question regarding the price you pay. There is no doubt – specially in the western parts of the world – that the excess of paparazzi photos is great. Seeing as fans want and demand more of their idols; a market of snapping their pictures in their most private moments has become crucial. Nowadays, idols are not free to be out of the public eye. Their lives becomes the lives of their fans and the rest of the public. There is no peace from being an idol, there

is always someone watching and that of course leads to idols not being able to live as they choose. Add to that the occasional crazy fan that stalks their idol, hordes of fangirls screaming their hearts out as they see them come out of the convenience store or threats to the idol's life from said fans or anti-fans. The price to pay as an idol is great taking this few examples into consideration.

But is that worth it considering the paycheck you might get for being a very popular idol, and the fact that you have thousands of admirers? As a fan, is it worth it spending your hard-earned cash on sometimes trivial things, or spending all of your free time obsessing over your favorite idol? The answer to those questions are as simple as the existence of this article.

**Fandom thy name is ape-shit crazy**

With our idols being bombarded to us at the expense of the time we give them, to the fanbase we choose to join because of them. Fandom, in this day and age, has evolved into something beyond our control. Fans are now more than ever slaves under their idols, and the idols are slaves under their fans ever-changing demands.

The Internet has become the demon that spits idols into stardom, and drags fans into fandom hell. Yet, there is no stopping the craziness that everyday is present and growing. Today more than never, fans and idols have the opportunity to express themselves as they choose. Sadly, this leads to a huge amount of stupidity being spread just about everywhere. Not that fans are stupid per say, it is that sometimes the bias one has towards an idol can turn a somewhat sane person into an ardent protector of something that most of the times is not real – yes, I am pointing my fingers at you, Twihards.

The carousel that is today's fandom spins very fast thanks to the presence of the Internet; there is really no end to what fans are pimped in order to become more loyal or more obsessed. Of course, there is no end as to how high a fan can scream when they see their idol in person, and what said idol gains in ear-related complications. The Internet has made it possible for the crazy to become more crazy, and for an idol to shine even more bright. - by julyssa diaz

# luck

Luck is, as it titles pronounces, a movie about luck and what that can make you gain if used correctly.

Ram Mehra is a very unlucky guy. He doesn't seem to get a break when it comes to his work or his personal life, always struck with bad luck in the aspects were he needs it; he is just a handsome young-fellow waiting for something to happen.

In struts Karim Moussa, with his silk clothes, is a kingpin that deals with high end and deadly bets. He promises Ram a better life as long as he becomes a pawn of human Russian roulette.

Excuse me as I take a breath to prepare to tell the fail that is this movie.

It is predictable, amateurish in the way it was edited, mixing more than adequate actors with newcomers that seem to have Paris Hilton as their acting inspiration. It was a pure torture to spend two hours of my life watching this, but I can give credit were credit is due. There is no doubt that the plot had potential, if only the production had given a rat's ass to make something out of it.

Alas, they made a movie where they wanted to pimp out beautiful young actors to the public, therefore this movie becomes nothing more than a bad actor introduction.  
- julili

½☆☆☆☆







maca's ★tings

amy's ★tings

(500) Days of Summer  
Inglourious Basterds  
The Hangover  
Altiplano  
The Ugly Truth  
Role Models  
The Accidental Husband  
The Proposal  
Distric 9  
The September Issue

★★★★☆  
★★★★★  
★★★★½☆  
★★★★☆☆  
★★★★½☆  
★★★★½☆  
★★★★½☆  
★★★★☆☆  
★★★★½☆  
★★★★☆☆  
★★★★☆☆

Nijushi no Hitomi (Twenty-Four Eyes)  
Gigantic  
Distance  
The Brothers Bloom  
La Ciociara (Two Women)  
Mancora  
Antichrist  
The Boat that Rocked  
Shonen Merikensack  
Los Abrazos Rotos (Broken Embraces)  
El Niño Pez (The Fish Child)  
Megane (Glasses)

★★★¾☆  
★★★★☆  
★★★★¼☆  
★★★★½☆  
★★★¾☆  
★★¼☆☆  
★★¼☆☆  
★★★★½☆  
★★★★¾☆  
★★★★☆☆  
★★¾☆☆  
★★★½☆

Addicted to Plastic  
Miao Miao  
(500) Days of Summer  
Away We Go  
In Search of a Midnight Kiss  
The Proposal  
Drag Me to Hell  
Jennifer's Body  
Shigatsu Monogatari (April Story)  
Jian Guo Da Ye (The Founding of a Republic)

★★★☆☆  
★★★½☆  
★★★★☆  
★★★¼☆  
★★½☆☆  
★★¾☆☆  
★★¾☆☆  
★★½☆☆  
★★¾☆☆  
★★★¼☆  
★★★¼☆

coming soon

in theaters

October  
- Where the Wild Things Are (16th)  
- New York, I Love You  
- Amelia (23rd)  
- Antichrist  
- The Private Lives of Pippa Lee  
- This is It (30th)  
  
November  
- Precious (6th)  
- Fantastic Mr. Fox (13th)

- Broken Embraces (20th)  
- Nine (25th)  
- The Road  
  
December  
- Brothers (4th)  
- Up in the Air  
- The Princess and the Frog (11th)  
- Invictus  
- The Lovely Bones

October  
Battlestar Galactica:  
The Plan (27th)  
[DVD][Blu-ray]  
Whatever Works  
[DVD][Blu-ray]  
Orphan  
[DVD][Blu-ray]  
Fear(s) of the Dark  
[DVD]  
Medicine for Melancholy  
[DVD]

November  
Food Inc. (3rd)  
[DVD]  
It's a Wonderful Life  
[Blu-ray]  
A Christmas Carol  
[Blu-ray]  
Wings of Desire  
[DVD][Blu-ray]  
Lemon Tree  
[DVD]  
UP (10th)  
[DVD][Two-Disc][Blu-ray]

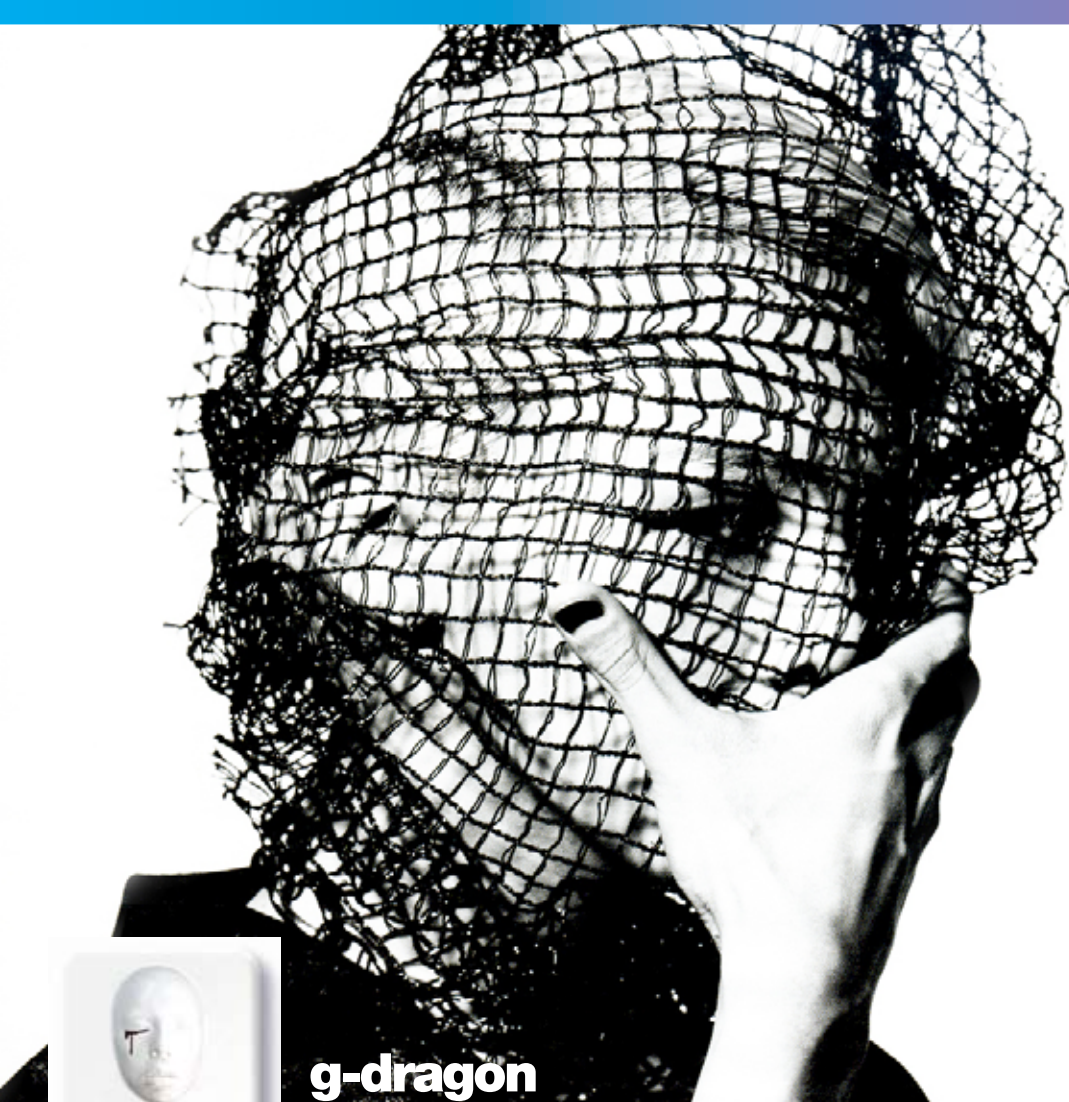
Ballast  
[DVD][Blu-ray]  
Star Trek (17th)  
[DVD][Two-Disc][Blu-ray]  
Gone with the Wind  
[DVD][Two-Disc][Blu-ray]  
Margaret Cho: Beautiful  
[DVD]  
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (24th)  
[DVD]  
Gomorrah  
[DVD][Blu-ray]

Funny People  
[DVD]  
  
December  
Into the Storm (1st)  
[DVD]  
A Christmas Tale  
[DVD][Blu-ray]

on dvd/blu-ray







g-dragon

Heartbreaker (August 18th 2009)

The highly anticipated solo debut of the Big Bang leader is an album that is versatile and innovative.

Known and famous for such compositions as *Haru Haru* and *Geojitmal*, the quality and innovation of this first solo album is not of the same caliber. Not in a negative sense. What stands out in this album is the variety of sounds and diversity of every song. This is not an album that sticks to one concept;

it is clear that G-Dragon has experimented with different sounds to try and grasp what is the core of himself. An album that offers something different in every song, one will find something to love regardless if one listens to Asian music or not. - julili

★★★★☆



arashi

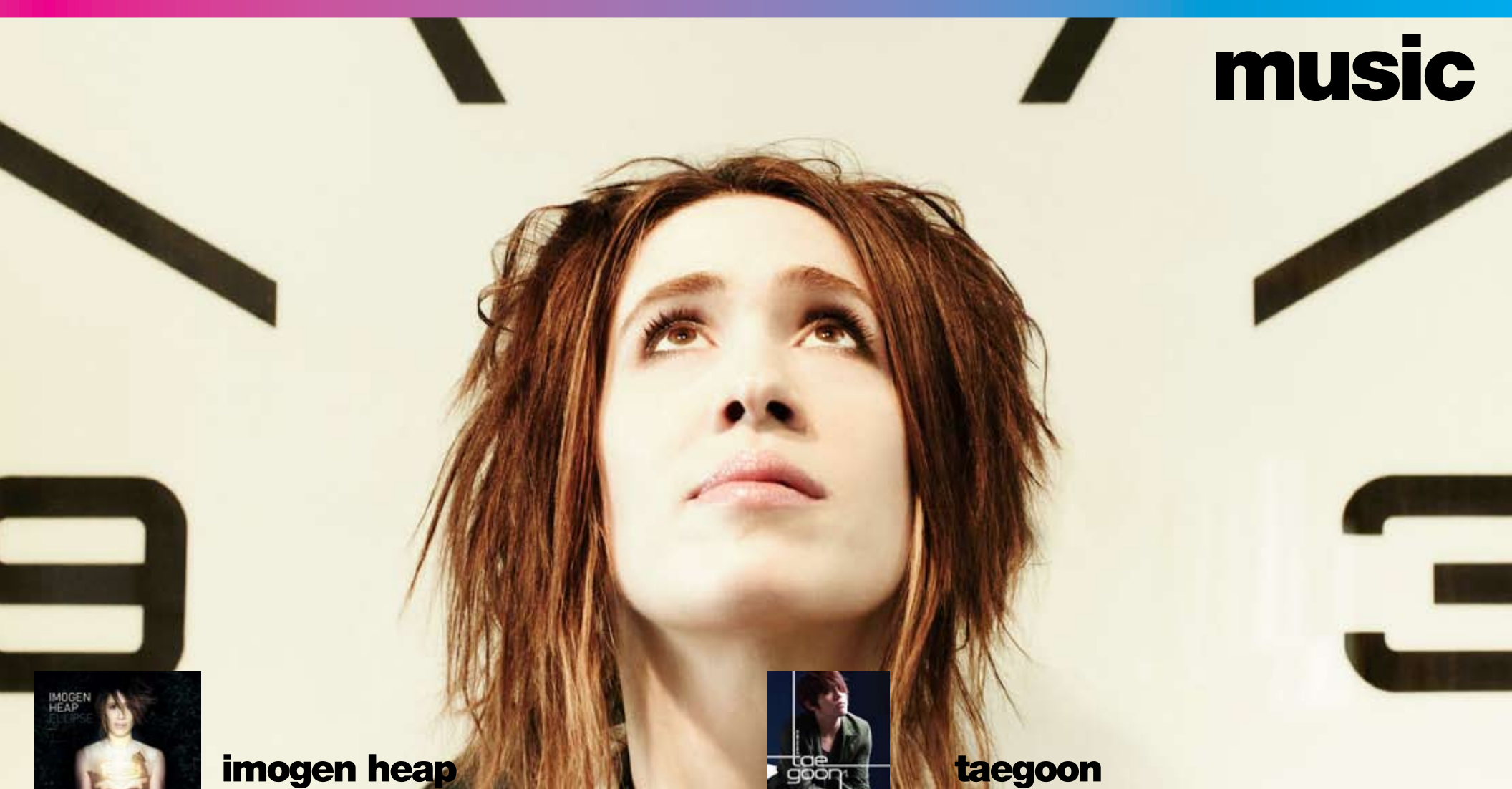
All the Best! 1999-2009 (August 19th 2009)

A compilation that takes you down the history of one of j-pop's finest. If you want to see the development of true j-pop then this is the album for you.

A warning: if you are inclined towards j-pop then you might find yourself a fan of Arashi after giving this album a listen – I know I was...

Filled with all their released singles plus some of the members own favourite tracks, this is an album filled with the development of the group. Perhaps not so great in the start but maturing and evolving towards the end, the road that they have taken musically is interesting and natural. - julili

★★★☆☆



imogen heap

Ellipse (August 24th 2009)

Imogen Heap comes back with what we've come to know as her sound, pop melodies with electronic flare to spare. Her tracks have often been used on television and movie compilations for their distinctive chill mood that would serve for great editing. However, as Track 2 suggests – *Where do we go from here? How do we carry on?*

As far as albums work, Ellipse is a perfectly fine album. As far as Imogen Heap goes,

there's nothing really new to show off on this one. It's as if she's found this comfortable zone, and she's just having a good time sitting there.

Highlights: Earth, Swoon, Between Sheets, and Aha! - amy

★★★¼☆



taegoon

The Third Mini-Album (September 17th 2009)

This rookie in the Korean music world does a comeback with a mini-album that is quite good.

Taegoon debuted this year with “Call Me” a hit that became quite popular. With this mini-album he does a comeback after a stretch over Japan. The sound is still very much his yet it is not tiresome. The release single “Betrayed” is addictive – is not

super amazing nor a flop, but still very well produced k-pop. I look forward to more releases from this “future” Bi Rain. - julili

★★★½☆



big bang

1st Japanese Album  
(August 19th 2009)

Big Bang releases an album that is typical them in wacky Japanese.

Call me silly but I kind of love Japanese with an accent and boy, does Big Bang have that. There is nothing outstanding about this album, just your regular BB sound that is always pleasant in your mp3 player.

Many of the the songs are just their Korean hits translated into Japanese, so only a few songs are completely new. Those are okay at best, and as a BB fan this album is acceptable.

An album that doesn't' stand out nor drowns. - julili

★★½☆☆

olafur arnalds

Found Songs  
(October 13th 2009)

Olafur Arnalds is the guy from Iceland that plays piano mixing it with strings and electronic beats to create a fresh neo-classical sound. And he's only freaking 22.

Early this year, Arnalds released a track a day for seven days on a project called Found Songs, which now make the album.

As with previous albums, this works as a whole more than as single tracks, so if you're a fan of single tracks, you might not get this.

Highlights: Lost Song, and Light.

★★★¼☆☆



more cmusic playlist

- 1. Perdel (Tao Pao Ji Hua) - Is This Love?
- 2. Carrchy (Ka Qi Shè) - Hong Se (Red)
- 3. Soundtoy (Sheng Yin Yu Wan Ju) - Xing Qi Tian Da Jie (Sunday Street)
- 4. Hedgehog (Ci Wei) - Wink
- 5. Frozenstreet (Leng Dong Jie) - Two L
- 6. Sonnet (Shi Si Hang Shi) - Stupid Baby
- 7. Lonely China Day (Ji Mo Xia Ri) - Yi (One)
- 8. Bearbiscuit (Xiao Xiong Bing Gan) - Silence
- 9. Second Hand Rose (Er Shou Mei Gui) - Ji Liang (Trick)
- 10. Carsick Cars - Guang Chang (The Square)
- 11. Lost Train (Diu Huo Che) - Cha Di Shi Jie (Tea Dregs World)
- 12. Super VC (Guo Wei VC) - 1978



more cmusic playlist

- 1. Convenience Store (Bian Li Shang Dian) - Chao Xi (Tide)
- 2. Ashura (E Xiu Luo) - Deng Dai (Wait)
- 3. The Honeys (Tian Mi de Hai Zi) - Yi Jiang Nan (Remember Jiangnan)
- 4. Reflector (Fan Guang Jing) - Lu (The Road)
- 5. Life Journey (Lu Xing Tuan) - Oh My Story
- 6. The Gar (Ga Diao) - Quan (Circle)
- 7. Yuguo (Yu Guo Yue Dui) - Er Duo Li de Hai (The Ocean in One's Ear)
- 8. New Pants (Xin Ku Zi) - Bye Bye Disco
- 9. The Mushrooms (Mo Gu Tuan) - Deng Dai (Wait)
- 10. Buyi - (Yang Rou Mian) Mutton Noodles
- 11. Toy's Factory - Niu Nai (Milk)
- 12. Supermarket (Chao Ji Shi Chang) - Mei Gui Gong Yuan (Rose Park)



chang shilei

Niu China  
(August 8th 2009)

Just as its occidental name states, Niu China is the album to showcase what's new in the Chinese music world.

The content in the album goes from traditional sounding Chinese ballads dealing with listening to your mother talking about the old times, to chanson francophone fused with electronic, R&B, Bossa Nova, to a Tango-ish-sounding track, all the way to a mind-blowing fusion of Beijing opera with strong rock/electronic sounds.

The Chinese name is *Niu! China! Post-80's Red Classics*, but lucky for you, you probably don't know what you're listening to, in case you're the "all communist stuff is evil" type of person. Plus, there's also the rendition of the Beijing Olympics' theme, *You and Me*.

Highlights: Endless Waves in Honghu Lake, In that Distant Place, I Love You Saibei Snow, and Why Are the Flowers This Red?

★★★★☆



more albums

- David Tao - Opus 69 ★★★½☆☆
- Darren Hayes - We Are Smug ★★¾☆☆
- Chris Lee - Li Yuchun ★★¾☆☆
- Eason Chan - H3M ★★★★★
- Eason Chan - Fifth Floor's Happiness ★★★★★
- Guo Ding - Wei Wei ★★★★★
- Whitney Houston - I Look to You ★★★★★
- Salyu - Extension ★★★★★
- Tang Qie Nong - Toucional ★★★★★
- Superband - Northbound Train ★★★★★
- Arctic Monkeys - Humbug ★★★★★
- Honokaa Boy SoundTrack ★★★★★
- Luck SoundTrack ★★★★★
- Olafur Arnalds - Eulogy for Evolution ★★★★★
- Hedgehog - Noise Hit World ★★★★★
- Wang Feng - Belief Flies in the Wind ★★★★★

backstreet boys

This is Us  
(October 6th 2009)

Back together with old time studio-friend Max Martin (among other people), the boys go back in time and produce some good-old fun Electro-pop. Think of it as a neverending late 90's era, when boy bands reign and bubblegum pop was the thing to listen to.

If I'm making it sound bad, it's because I don't think it works. BSB was already grown-up and experimenting with other stuff, and I'm not talking about the pop/rock tracks. They were already getting a couple of tracks with great beats, when suddenly we're back where we started.

Possible lifesavers? If I Knew Then, and Masquerade.

★★☆☆☆



coming soon

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| October 20th                   | November 3rd                  |
| Tim McGraw - Southern Voice    | Carrie Underwood - Play On    |
| Flight of the Conchords -      | Glee: The Music, Volume 1     |
| I Told You I Was Freaky        | Weezer - Raditude             |
| Snow Patrol - Late Night Tales | Kathy Griffin -               |
| David Bisbal - Sin Mirar Atras | Suckin it for the Holidays    |
| Vertical Horizon -             |                               |
| There and Back Again           | November 17th                 |
|                                | Norah Jones - The Fall        |
| October 27th                   | Leona Lewis - Echo            |
| This is It Soundtrack          | Boyz II Men - Love            |
| Pink Martini -                 | Robbie Williams -             |
| Splendor in the Grass          | Reality Killed the Video Star |
| Train - Save me San Francisco  |                               |
| The Swell Season - Strict Joy  |                               |
| Tegan & Sara - Sainthood       |                               |
| Wolfmother - Cosmic Egg        |                               |



# juri ueno and the five bags



## 上野樹里と5つの鞆

*Ueno Juri to Itsutsu no Kaban* is the 5-episode-mini-series produced by WOWOW, in which Japanese actress Juri Ueno alongside directors Hideta Takahata, Michael Arias, Nobuhiro Yamashita, Takuma Takasaki, and Koji Hagiuda tell 5 different stories surrounding 5 different bags.

As a whole, I still don't understand why choose “bags” as a theme. According to the introduction, *people are like bags*, but I don't get it. However, for any Japanese film lover, this series is worth watching if only to watch more experimental work by some of Japan's directors, including Michael Arias (Tekkonkinkreet), and Nobuhiro Yamashita (Linda, Linda, Linda).

The project has not very much of a commercial appeal, like let's say Nodame Cantabile or Rookies, but at least it will attract Juri Ueno fans that will be interested in seeing her playing 5 different characters, including a dramatized version of herself on episode 4, On the Road, perhaps my favorite episode for the clarity in the presentation of the idea of people as bags... but that's probably me bullshitting you.

The fact is that the other four episodes aren't all that clear on what's the importance of the bags. On the first episode, Guitar Case Girl, I'm not even sure if the guitar case is supposed to work as a bag holding money. But what does it mean!? Is it because things aren't what they seem to be?

On episode 2, HOPE, she plays an animator (you even see a Tekkonkinkreet poster!) working late hours to finish a project, when suddenly she gets trapped in the elevator overnight. You get a shot of her bag filled with loads of late-night-hours-crap and she even empties her wallet (she has a lot of crap there too) – does it have any significance?

Episode 3, My Neighbor's Neighbor Akira, is probably the most-heavy-themed of the bunch. For a moment I thought Akira was the symbolic representation of the character because Akira happened to appear right after “news” begin sinking in and is gone after the doctor's appointment, that and the fact that you don't really know Akira is a “she,” and she's looking for the bag.

The last episode, Hinata Suddenly..., is the one that deals more with Japanese customs as they present the festival of Tanabata, in which they celebrate the meeting of Orihime and Hikoboshi. Tanabata takes over on this episode, and leaves “bags” on the side, at least that's what I felt.

★★★¾☆

tv



# mad men

Taking some time to watch everyone's favorite series because everyone seems to fuzz over Mad Men, and I needed to know why. At first sight, Mad Men is great. It's got complicated characters, it's well-written and it's well-placed within the aesthetic timeline – it looks like the window to the era, though my mom thinks it should be in black and white.

It's interesting to see Don Draper as a character on the first season, and see the contrast of who he is on the second. He's a cool character, but I find myself calling him an idiot out loud. His relation to his wife, and other women irk me so much I just want to kick him.

I know I should be supporting Peggy as the young woman making it in the big boy world. It's great, I just don't know why I find Ms. Holloway more interesting. Oh, Joan! What's in store for you? The only reason why I'd be rushing to catch up on the third season~

★★★¾☆



## glee - season 1

If you like crazy humor making fun of everything in the world and not minding if you're politically correct, then this Ryan Murphy project is for you. Looking like High School Musical has never angered so many parents, because this is HSM on crack having a baby during a threesome with Ryan's old baby, The WB's Popular, and everyone's favorite loser show Freaks & Geeks – and nobody knows who's the father!

Keep the eyes open, and your ears in tune for those hidden dirty jokes that will get passed any censorship. If you think you heard it, it's probably because you heard it – just look at Popular's Ms. Glass gift to her sister Nurse Glass... a hairless pussy!



## house - season 6

My favorite asshole doctor is kind of back, with a pretty wicked 2hr premiere that included hot-German-export Franka Potente, only to prove that all House M.D. needs to run is Hugh Laurie. It was great to see a whole new format for the premiere, with different opening title sequence and all, and pretty killer cinematography.

However, House is not his usual way since he's out of rehab, and trying to be all nice so I love it when the asshole peeks through. The writers also let Foreman run the department... again. Now, I've never warmed up to Foreman, I still think he's an idiot and an uninteresting character.

And with the last episode making me argue about ethics with people, I think this could shape up to be a pretty great season.



## dexter - season 4

Everyone's favorite serial killer is back...

with baby, and all that comes with parenthood. I admit it, I was kinda worried how it would all play out. It seems to be working fine as the first few episodes showed, as it creates new problems Dexter wouldn't have faced before – like a sloppy kill.

Moreover, John Lithgow (Yes, our favorite Dick Solomon) is playing the Trinity Killer, and he actually freaks me out like no other. It's the calm voice, and all the cordiality that gets me because that's the worse type of serial killers you want to run into... the ones you don't see coming.



# cusco bizarro: muéstrame el ombligo

by María Luisa del Río Labarthe  
Photography/Travel

★★★½☆

When I picked up a copy of “Bizarre Cusco: Show me the Navel,” I had no idea what I was picking up. For one, this doesn't look like your typical travel guide. The cover gave me the feeling I was picking up a book on the new wave of Cusco art.

You can probably say this works as a Photobook, but it has loads of text in it, useful especially in its section on hotels and other places to stay, where the author describes a few places in accommodation, prices and even the mood – the Hostel Frankenstein anecdote is pretty funny.

There is also a section on “Things They Might Have Not Told You” like that painting of San Pedro Nolasco sucking on the Virgin's breasts for milk (alongside Baby Jesus), or the painting of The Last Supper in which Jesus is having Cuy (Guinea Pig).

The book has also sections on places to shop, places to eat, some fashion, spiritual stuff, religious festivities and even some “freak” talk about the Incan flag, Barbie the Drag Queen Fighter and haunted houses. There's definitely some good stuff in this, especially for backpackers. The good thing about the content is that it has both positive and negative reviews, so it actually helps you.

Technically, the book is not huge, but it's quite heavy for its nearly 300 pages. The cover is pretty flimsy, there isn't a hardcover version that I'm aware of. It's printed on quality paper, with modern design and bright colors. Some photos are better than others, the author has her moments when taking pictures like any of us, but the design team in charge of this project made it work.

All travel guides should be this fresh.

# books



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