



On The Verge

# 5 ARTISTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

## 01

### **Mumford & Sons** LONDON, U.K.

Nu-Folk String Band

• When London's **Mumford & Sons** made its U.S. television debut on *The Late Show with David Letterman* this past February, the four members appeared slightly nervous as they reached the chorus of their single, "Little Lion Man." The original version includes an emphatic expletive in the refrain and the band had spent the day practicing with an audience-friendly substitution. "It was so hard," laughs bassist **Ted Dwane**. "That word is unfortunately used about 12 times." Mumford & Sons came together in 2007 within London's burgeoning nu-folk scene (Laura Marling, Noah and The Whale). "We'd played together in various combinations, so we knew each other musically," says Dwane. The string-heavy band—**Marcus Mumford**, **Country Winston**, **Ben Lovett** and Dwane—has no drummer, resulting in a rich, rootsy sound. ("We all have to give a little bit more to make up for the lack of percussion," Dwane says.) The group recorded a handful of EPs in 2008 before releasing its full-length debut, *Sigh No More* (Glassnote), last October. The album has a sharply defined, thematic sound—think: the kind of impassioned campfire sing-alongs that would take place in a John Steinbeck novel. After the band finished their cuss-free performance on *The Late Show*, Letterman joked "they're going to take the money they make for being on our show tonight and hire a drummer." Not necessary, Dave. [www.mumfordandsons.com](http://www.mumfordandsons.com) ● *Margaret Rose*

## 02

**Mountain Man** BENNINGTON, VT.

## No Man's Women

• A little more than a year ago, **Mountain Man** was born at Bennington College in the small town of Bennington, Vt. Comprised of three angelic female voices (no man in this band), **Molly Erin Sarle**, **Alexandra Sauser-Monnig** and **Amelia Randall Meath** sing beautiful, haunting a cappella or lightly backed acoustic American folk music, similar to the sirens of the river from the movie *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* The girls weren't even really friends at school, but after stumbling upon their collective powers, forming a group almost seemed to be a given. "Since the first time we ever sang together, something happened between us that I've never felt," says Sarle. "That's why we kept singing. We didn't necessarily think we were ever gonna go on tour or record an album, we just did it because of the way it felt." Now band has a debut record, *Made the Harbor* and are touring the country, benefiting from the contemporary folk resurgence led by bands like Fleet Foxes and The Low Anthem. But Sarle is hesitant to latch on to any scene; it's more primal for her. "More than our music sounding like folk, it's about the experience of seeing us play," she explains, "and hearing the harmonies we make inside of your body."

[www.mountainman.bandcamp.com](http://www.mountainman.bandcamp.com) ● Aaron Kayce



## 04

**Truth & Salvage Co.**

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

## Together We Stand

• With the recent release of a strong self-titled debut album produced by the Black Crowes' Chris Robinson, Los Angeles' **Truth & Salvage Co.** paved its sonic highway the old-fashioned way: four of the six members are quality songwriters. Originally hailing from North Carolina and Indiana, the band members found themselves in L.A. playing freeform gigs in ad hoc groups and venues. "We realized there was chemistry," says guitarist/vocalist **Scott Kinnebrew**. "We decided to start delving deeper into our individual song catalogs, practicing and working on harmonies all the time." The group mixes equal parts Americana, country, folk and bluegrass, as well as The Band- and CSNY-like four-part harmonies. "The four of us are singing almost throughout every song so it never gets too timbre-y with one voice," says Kinnebrew. "The song is filled out with harmony, multiple souls breathing in unison." The band absorbs its myriad of melodic pedigrees, and, instead, appears to know its own identity quite well—it's all about the songs," he says. "We've got some really good songs that are accessible to a lot of different types of folks. We have been playing in bands for a long time, and we love the thickness in sound that comes with a band. You can't do that by yourself. Alone, we are good; together, we are great."



## 03

**Leroy Justice** NEW YORK, N.Y.

## Fly-By-The-Seat-Of-Your-Soul Rock

• **Leroy Justice** borrowed its name from a friend's father shortly after forming in the early '00s. Lead vocalist and guitar player **Jason Gallagher** explains, "We felt it was a good blend of soul and Americana, just like our music." Did the actual Leroy Justice approve of the NYC-based ensemble appropriating his name? "He actually wears our T-shirt with his own name on it," Gallagher reveals. Influenced by Sam Cooke, John Prine and "a healthy dose of rock classics," Leroy Justice has developed a ferocious live show and released two strong studio albums over the past few years. "We have a lot of tight rock and alt-country type tunes that you can rock on your car stereo, but we also have this improvisational, fly-by-the-seat-of-your-soul feel that allows our shows to connect a lot more than a one-sided performance," Gallagher says about what separates his band from the pack. The quintet's 2009 sophomore effort, *The Loho Sessions*, earned the band its biggest critical acclaim so far, yet Gallagher believes, "If you haven't seen us live, you really don't know Leroy." [www.leroyjustice.com](http://www.leroyjustice.com) ● Scott Bernstein

## 05

**Rebellion** SANTA BARBARA, CALIF.

## Peace Rebels

• Santa Barbara-based **Rebellion** is certainly not complaining about music's digital revolution. A half-year after its debut, *Courage to Grow*, dropped in June 2007, the band was awarded the iTunes Editor's Choice for Best Reggae Album. "We had no idea that was going to happen," says lead singer and guitarist **Eric Rachmany**, shortly after the release of the band's new album, *Bright Side of Life*. "All of a sudden, people started catching on." This was no overnight success, however. The band had three years of continuous touring behind it. Rachmany first met his band mates—keyboardist **Rory Carey**, bassist **Marley D Williams** and bassist **Wesley Finley**—during college and they found themselves always playing reggae, though that was never their intention. "When all four of us get together," Rachmany comments, "it comes out as reggae." First inspired after seeing founding Black Uhuru vocalist Don Carlos perform, Rachmany was hooked. The positive vibrations spread to the band's name, which the quartet carefully contemplated. "The word 'rebel' has a negative connotation, and there's ways to get across messages in a peaceful manner," he says. "One of the best ways is through your words. We were in a great position to be positive role models, and we knew we could accomplish that by keeping people happy and motivated." [www.rebellionmusic.com](http://www.rebellionmusic.com) ● Derek Beres

