



## Local scene: From 'Femme Frequencies' to the rugged blues-rock of Ghost Hounds and the indie chaos of Gaadge



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Great compilations of Pittsburgh music — which were plentiful back in the day — typically come with a track list of familiar faces and names.

“Femme Frequencies, Vol. 1” is not one of those.

The 11-song set comes from singer-songwriter-producer Lauren DeMichiei, who, under the banner of ElectricRed, has worked wonders with a mix of mostly non-professional musicians.

“The goal,” she says, “is to highlight women creators regardless of age

and regardless of how experienced or involved with the music scene they are. Music is such an important part of our lives, it felt necessary to highlight that therapists, lawyers, and non-profit coordinators are creators, too. You don't need to be a full-time aspiring musician to fully produce a song you wrote — just make it.”

It helps to have DeMichiei there to help make it light and airy, or dreamy, or haunting. The songs by Martha D'Abruzzo, Kristina Cerrone, Abbey Martin, Huuli (with Hollyhood), Michelle Mounts, I Medina, the more established Cherylann Hawk and DeMichiei herself range from indie-folk to ambient electronic and hip-hop, evoking the likes of Regina Spektor, Kate Bush and Laurie Anderson.

Even with the range of styles, “Femme Frequencies” is immersive and seamless with no need for the skips usually required from a compilation.

“I suppose my composition and creativity on these songs is the main thread that holds these songs together,” DeMichiei says. “But these women are brilliant, all with important stories to be told and emotion to express, so that fact really shines through the project.”

Although we're seeing Taylor Swift, Beyonce and P!nk with some of the biggest stadium tours of the summer, DeMichiei says, “There hasn't been a lot of space in the music ‘industry’ for women. Citing the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative [study](#), representation of women in popular music and in the recording studio is lower than you would think. That's what makes ‘Femme Frequencies’ such an important project.”

It will be available Thursday on Apple Music, Spotify, Bandcamp and other streaming services.

## **Ghost Hounds roar**

Ghost Hounds, by contrast, is on the opposite end from the femme frequency.

“First Last Time.” the fourth album from the prolific Pittsburgh band

founded by guitarist/entrepreneur Thomas Tull, is formulaic but tasty, hard-driving blues-rock in the tradition of the Stones, Black Crowes, ZZ Top and Lynyrd Skynyrd. In decades past, these songs, handled with grit by frontman Tre Nation, would have been all over WDVE and similar stations nationwide.

“[First Last Time](#)” is Ghost Hounds’ debut on Gibson Records, a new Nashville-based label from the famed guitar company that also includes Slash Ft. Myles Kennedy and the Conspirators. It features eight new songs, plus covers of Led Zeppelin’s “Hot Dog” and John Denver’s “Country Roads.”

It is not getting lost in the shuffle. The first single, the Americana-flavored “[Last Train To Nowhere](#),” went to No. 3 on the iTunes Top 10 Rock Charts and appeared in the premiere episode of “Special Ops: Lioness,” the new show from “Yellowstone” co-creator Taylor Sheridan.

Upon release, the band noted in a statement, “...it was kind of amazing how dialed in we were recording ‘First Last Time.’ Thomas writes the songs and really leans on his ability to create characters and narratives in his head, then he tells that person’s story through song.”

### **‘Nice’ move**

Speaking of blues-rock, “[Nice Ain’t Got Me Nothin’](#)” is a little somethin’ for Billy the Kid & The Regulators.

The fourth album from the Beaver County band led by Billy Evanochko rose to No. 3 on the Roots Music Report U.S. blues chart in July and went to No. 1 on the Canadian chart.

It includes a single, “[Bull--- Barbie](#),” that’s not about the Mattel doll but rather inspired by a toxic relationship.

The band, a former Blues Society of Western Pennsylvania Challenge winner, will be at [Club Cafe](#) on the South Side with Pierce Dipner at 8

p.m. Friday. Cover is \$12.

## **Gaadge away**

Pittsburgh's fine tradition of noisy and delightfully chaotic indie-rock continues with Gaadge, which began as a bedroom project for Mitch DeLong in Erie in the summer of 2014 and went full blown when he relocated to Pittsburgh in 2016 and issued a split release with Barlow.

"Yeah?," the band's acclaimed full-length debut in 2021, is now followed by "[Somewhere Down Below](#)," a release on Crafted Sounds (vinyl/digital) and Michi Tapes (cassette), that's described as "a more collaborative effort that features contributions from the entire band" — guitarist Ethan Oliva, bassist Nick Boston and drummer Andy Yadeski.

Gaadge's combo of shoegaze and noise-rock draws upon the influences of Lilys, Pavement, My Bloody Valentine, Swirlies and our own feeble little horse. And for this record, credit also goes to "Evil Dead 2," the Waldameer Park ride Whacky Shack and house/studio dog Benny.

They note of the studio, "A lot of this was not planned or practiced, and being out in the woods really brought us together. We weren't thinking too much about what we wanted to do, and we had a very loose plan. Being able to spend that much time together, uninterrupted, was the biggest inspiration."

The album is released Friday, followed by a show at 7 p.m. Saturday at [Bottlerocket Social Club](#) with Gina Gory and Gundy. Cover is \$10.

## **Pantera relentless**

Last week, the PG checked in with local blues-rocker Byron Nash, who learned a thing or two along the way from his favorite guitarist, the late Dimebag Darrell.

On Friday, he was at The Pavilion at Star Lake for the Pantera reunion, which consists of original members Phil Anselmo and bassist Rex Brown

joined by guitarist Zakk Wylde of Black Label Society and drummer Charlie Benante of Anthrax.

“It’s the best they’ve sounded in a very long time,” Nash says. “Super tight, set was dialed in. They were relentlessly smashing the crowd with Pantera hit after hit. It also felt different than most shows that have those missing members. It felt like a genuine and true tribute concert to their fallen bandmates and not a money grab at all. It also put a lot of modern day metal bands to shame cause they had that classic Pantera-stank groove that ‘feels’ like a band, not dialed in over tracks. Zakk and Charlie were the perfect musicians to play drums and guitar.”

Nash was there with his son Tommy, who, he says, “was raised on them, but never saw them. It was a beautiful moment of connection through heavy music.”

NASH.V.ILL, his band with singer Jacque Mae, will headline a [Pittsburgh Vegfest](#) lineup on Saturday at Allegheny Commons Park, North Side, that also features Steve Soboslai (of Punchline), Paul Luc, The Yeggs and more. He plays at 4:20 p.m.

### **Vintage Pittsburgh metal**

The Everett, Pennsylvania-based [Heaven and Hell Records](#) is prepping a fall of release of three vintage albums from the Pittsburgh metal band Iron Cross/Holocross.

The band, formed in 1982 with guitarist P.J. Kacin, singer Char R.G, bassist Max Uzax and drummer Ray Molinari, released its debut album, “Warhead,” in 1985 with what the label calls “a Sunset Strip-type sound akin to bands such as Motley Crue, Ratt and Quiet Riot with some Judas Priest-type elements.”

Due to a conflict with a Florida band, Iron Cross became Holocross for its thrashier second, self-titled album in 1987. The third album, “Hypercaust,” went unreleased until 2005.

All three will be remastered and released on CD with original artwork.

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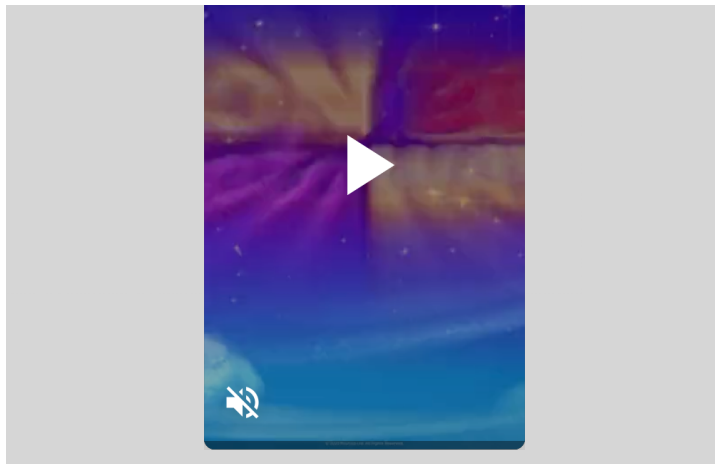
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