

# TEXAS MUSIC

EXTRA

Nov. '14

news

click here to read

calendar

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releases

click here to read

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## 'A Little Less Houston Now'

Little Joe Washington, the blues maven of the Third Ward and one of Houston's finest and most beloved musicians, died Nov. 12 after an extended illness. He was 75. His friend and caretaker Jomonica Phoenix confirmed the news on Facebook. Wiry and frail, Washington had made numerous trips to hospitals in the Houston area over the past few years but always returned to the stage, ready to engage fans and thrill them one last time. He played guitar with his teeth, sometimes with his crotch at various clubs in the city like Boondocks, the Continental Club and Blue Iguana. He was eccentric on stage, taking time to play skeletal fragments of songs before stopping abruptly. And he was wild – he flung himself into the music despite being all of five feet, five inches, and in the end he always remained true to

the blues. Following the announcement of his death, fans – many of them musicians – took to social media to offer tributes and reminiscences in an outpouring of support. "Rest in peace, Little Joe," one fan wrote. "You were one of the last weird pieces of Houston left standing." Added another: "We're a little less Houston now." Washington had been hospitalized for a few days but appeared to be improving, saying he was eager to play his Tuesday night gig at Boondocks. The *Houston Press* reported that the musician's fortunes had been looking up



on another front as well. According to Phoenix, Washington was days from being evicted from his apartment before a crowd-funding campaign she initiated – through [youcaring.com](http://youcaring.com) – raised enough to make his monthly rent several times over. "I cried when I saw all the donations," Phoenix said.



## Girls Night Out

If there was any doubt who the dominant female country artist is, Miranda Lambert (above) answered those questions loud and

clear Nov. 5, adding four CMA Awards to her growing collection. Lambert claimed the first award presented during the ABC telecast, winning Single Record of the Year for "Automatic." She'd strike again during the next hour with a win for Album of the Year for *Platinum*. There will have to be a little more mantle space at the Lambert household, as both Lambert and her husband, Blake Shelton, earned their fifth straight Female and Male Vocalist trophies, respectively. In winning her fifth, Lambert surpassed Reba McEntire and Martina McBride for most wins in the category, while Shelton tied George Strait with his win.



Lambert wasn't the only Lone Star winner on the evening. Kacey Musgraves (left), sporting an impressive bouffant, earned a surprise nod in the Song of the Year category for "Follow Your Arrow" – which, with a peak of No. 43, is the first Song of

the Year winner to not make the top 40 on the *Billboard* Country chart. The win marked her second CMA trophy after winning New Artist of the Year in 2013. Just a few minutes after winning her award, Musgraves added one of the highlights of the night with "You're Lookin' at Country," in which she was joined on-stage (right) by the song's original artist – the legendary Loretta Lynn – in front of a replica of the Grand Ole Opry barn.



## TEXAS MUSIC EXTRA

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## The Last Waltz



*Glen Campbell: I'll Be Me* follows the country pop singer on what has to be one of the most amazing farewell concert tours in music history. In this moving documentary, we see Campbell suffering from Alzheimer's disease, yet we also share his triumph as he embarks on an ambitious series of performances across the country – his guitar and singing skills

**news**  
click here to read

**calendar**  
click here to read

**releases**  
click here to read

**q&a**  
click here to read

remarkably intact. The result is a film that's exhilarating, wistful, inspiring and haunting. This is in no small part due to the folksy presence of Campbell, who has a down-to-earth sense of humor and an awareness of his affliction, even if he can't remember much of anything. When he gets on the stage, it's as if the unforgiving disease somehow has miraculously disappeared, and he can be himself again. His abilities astonish the doctors – and viewers. James Keach's documentary gets off to an arresting start as Campbell and his indefatigable wife, Kim, view home movies. Campbell is genuinely awestruck when Kim reminds him that the young, handsome dude on the screen is Campbell himself. Fortunately, laughter outweighs tears in *I'll Be Me*, a film bound to boost Campbell's legacy as a performer and an artist, making classics like "Gentle on My Mind" and "Wichita Line-man" more indelible than ever.



RUTHIE FOSTER-JOHN NEMETH  
MINGO FISHTRAP-STEVE FORBERT  
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**news**  
click here to read

**calendar**  
click here to read

**releases**  
click here to read

**q&a**  
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## Waiting On James and Willis

The average James McMurtry fan has been more concerned about when the singer-songwriter would get around to making a new record than McMurtry himself. *Complicated Game*, his first in seven years, is set for a February release. "Didn't feel like it," the typically frank McMurtry says. "I wasn't in any hurry. Our tour dates were still draw-

ing pretty well – until they finally started to taper off, and it became more critical. It used to be we'd tour to promote record sales, but now it's the other way around: we put out records to promote tour dates. The main thing is when you put a record out, you get written about a lot more, and people know you're coming to town." Perhaps best known for his poignant anthem "We Can't Make It Here,"

McMurtry (left) says the new album, produced by C.C. Adcock, isn't as political as his last studio release, the acclaimed *Childish Things*. "There's a couple of things that touch on war," McMurtry says, "not really ad-



dressing the right or wrong of it. I've got one song that's sung from the point of view of one guy who's just getting out of the army. I do that every now and then just to remind people that we still have armed conflicts going on. We still have people half-way around the world getting shot at, and the media doesn't seem to be dwelling on that very much." Meanwhile, music lovers have been waiting *four decades* for Willis Alan Ramsey to come out with a second album. His



original, self-titled masterpiece has enjoyed a passionate, nationwide cult following since 1972. Songs from the album have been recorded by Jimmy Buffett, Jerry Jeff Walker, Waylon Jennings, Shawn Colvin, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, America and Captain and Tennille. Ramsey (above) is actively working on an album called *Gentilly*, with backing from Dallas and Austin friends and investors. He's been tweaking it for several years, but lost momentum when his Loveland, Colo., recording studio was flooded last September in a disaster that destroyed 1,500 homes and damaged 17,500, including Ramsey's. He's currently on his Flood Recovery Tour with wife Alison Rogers and his friend and musical compadre, Bob Livingston.

## Bey 101 Studies



Subjects: Beyoncé (l) & Rihanna.

If you've ever wanted to examine Beyoncé's "Drunk in Love" lyrics or analyze Rihanna's fashion choices for college credit, you're in luck – assuming you attend UT-Austin. Next semester (Spring 2015), UT's African-American Studies program will offer a class titled "Beyoncé Feminism, Rihanna Womanism." According to the university's website, the Beyoncé/Rihanna course won't be full of "Umbrella" sing-alongs and lessons about how to do the "Single Ladies" dance, but instead the class will focus on the pop stars' roles in feminism and black American culture.



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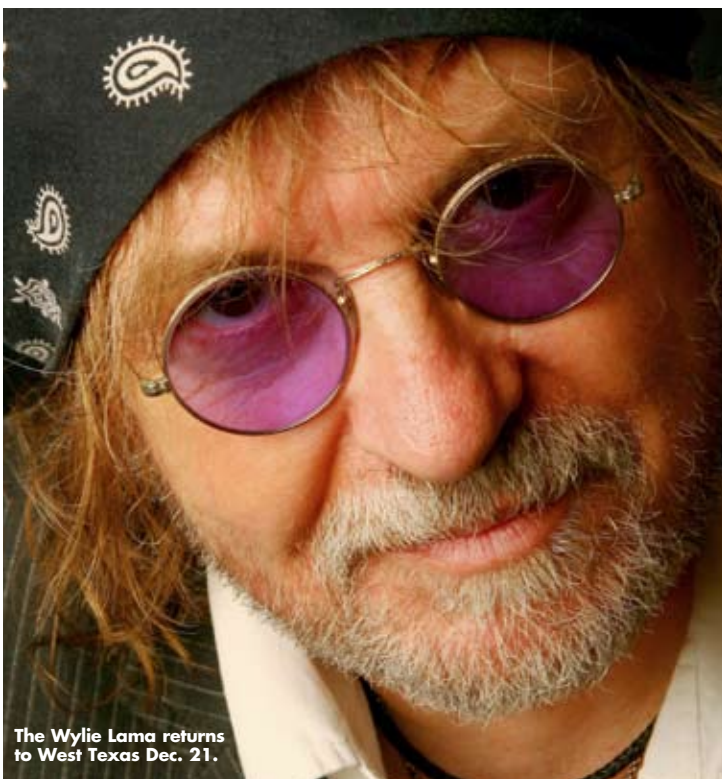
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**news**  
click here to read

**calendar**  
click here to read

**releases**  
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The Wylie Lama returns to West Texas Dec. 21.

### Artwalk Alpine

Nov. 21-22 • Various Locations • Alpine  
[www.artwalkalpine.com](http://www.artwalkalpine.com)

Ray Wylie Hubbard and the Derailers headline this year's celebration of the arts in far West Texas – the 21st year of Artwalk Alpine. Hubbard will perform at 10 p.m. on Friday night following Hogan and Moss, a Marfa folk duo, while the Derailers play on Saturday after Los Pinche Gringos, the Terlingua quartet known for its border sound. What began as a small grassroots effort in 1994 – with a handful of artists and gallery owners who desired a collective open house to showcase their art – has been transformed into a major event. Artwalk Alpine promotes the arts by providing educational, economic, and entertainment opportunities for children, students, patrons, artists and tourists. It's also a chance to bring art to students in Alpine schools. "Since the first Gallery Night, we knew we had something special ... something folks in far West Texas were craving," co-founder and executive director Keri Blackman says. "They wanted culture, a reason to socialize, to get dressed up and visit with friends they hadn't seen in a while – and check out the art scene."

### NOVEMBER

**16–22**

#### Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza

Lila Cockrell Theatre & Henry B Gonzalez Convention Center  
San Antonio  
[www.mariachimusic.com](http://www.mariachimusic.com)

**22**

#### Spirit Fest

Concrete Street Amphitheater  
Corpus Christi  
[www.spiritfestcorpuschristi.com](http://www.spiritfestcorpuschristi.com)

**25**

#### Evenings with the Songwriter

Dr. Eugene Clark Library  
Lockhart  
[www.eveningswithsongwriter.com](http://www.eveningswithsongwriter.com)

### DECEMBER

**5–7**

#### Dickens on the Strand

The Strand National Historic Landmark District  
Galveston  
[www.galveston.com](http://www.galveston.com)

**6–7**

#### Rock 'n' Roll Marathon

Downtown San Antonio  
[www.runrocknroll.com/san-antonio](http://www.runrocknroll.com/san-antonio)

**16–24**

#### Armadillo Christmas Bazaar

Palmer Events Center  
Austin  
[www.armadillobazaar.com](http://www.armadillobazaar.com)

**26–27**

#### Lights All Night

Dallas Convention Center  
Dallas  
[www.lightsallnight.com](http://www.lightsallnight.com)

## new releases

Sept 2	Johnny Winter	<i>Step Back</i>	Megaforce
Sept 2	The Washers	<i>Everything At Once</i>	Double Ringer
Sept 9	Drew Kennedy	<i>Sad Songs Happily Played</i>	Atlas Aurora
Sept 23	Gary Clark Jr.	<i>Live</i>	Warner Bros
Sept 23	Lee Ann Womack	<i>The Way I'm Livin'</i>	Sugar Hill
Sept 30	Kat Edmonson	<i>The Big Picture</i>	Sony
Oct 7	Emily Wolfe	<i>Roulette</i>	Self-Released
Oct 7	Hal Ketchum	<i>I'm the Troubadour</i>	Music Road
Oct 7	Shakey Graves	<i>And the War Came</i>	Dualtone
Oct 14	Dirty River Boys	<i>The Dirty River Boys</i>	DRB
Oct 14	Josh Abbott Band	<i>Tuesday Night EP</i>	Atlantic Nashville
Oct 14	John Slaughter	<i>Meet in the Middle</i>	Bigger Sky
Oct 27	Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble	<i>The Complete Epic Recordings Collection</i>	Legacy
Oct 27	Stoney LaRue	<i>Aviator</i>	Entertainment One
Oct 27	Scott Dean	<i>All Over Again</i>	Self-Released
Oct 27	Wade Bowen	<i>Wade Bowen</i>	Amp
Nov 1	Jeremy O'Bannon	<i>Olivia</i>	Self-Released
Nov 4	Ronnie Fauss	<i>Built to Break</i>	Normal Town
Nov 4	Stephen Doster	<i>Arizona</i>	Atticus
Nov 10	... And You Will Know Us By the Trail of Dead	<i>IX</i>	Superball
Nov 11	Moonlight Towers	<i>Heartbeat Overdrive</i>	Chicken Ranch
Nov 14	Stephen Chadwick	<i>Let's Do This Thing</i>	Stag
Nov 17	Old 97's	<i>Hitchhike to Rhome</i>	Omnivore
Nov 24	Beyoncé	<i>Platinum Edition Box Set</i>	Columbia
Dec 2	Willie Nelson and Sister Bobbie	<i>December Day (Willie's Stash, Vol. 1)</i>	Legacy
Jan 13	Cody Canada & the Departed	<i>HippieLovePunk</i>	Underground
Jan 20	Ryan Bingham	<i>Fear and Saturday Night</i>	Thirty Tigers
Feb 25	James McMurtry	<i>Complicated Game</i>	Complicated Game

[news](#)  
click here to read

[calendar](#)  
click here to read

[releases](#)  
click here to read

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## Emily Wolfe

### *Roulette*

Self-Released



Never one to be pigeonholed, Austin's resident dream-rocker, Emily Wolfe, has been listening to a lot of Led Zeppelin, Jack White and Linda Ronstadt, and the new

influences certainly show on her latest EP, *Roulette*. Wolfe's wispy soprano vocals evoke the best of both Leslie Feist and Stevie Nicks, floating atop fuzzy leads and thumping bass on songs that rock hard and cut deep, from the haunting, melodramatic "Ghost Limb" to sassy, super-catchy lead single "Swoon." The latter sounds almost like it belongs on a Black Keys album, with its exuberant electric guitar riffs, stomping drums, choruses of "oohs" and tart refrain – "You just want the money, they could hurt you anyway." Wolfe showcases an impressive variety of vocal inflections on the more mid-tempo "Marionette," alternately delicate and snarling but always vulnerable, as she sings from the perspective of someone painfully desperate to reignite a lost love. *Roulette* proves once and for all that this talented songstress is a master of all styles, from bluesy shuffles to more ethereal rock ballads, but her voice is the heart and soul – dusty, lilting and impossible to ignore. –

**ALLIE EISSLER**

## Jamie Talbert & the Band of Demons

### *Tomorrow Night*

Self-Released



A longtime presence on the East Texas bar-band and singer-songwriter scene, Beaumont native Jamie Talbert has nonetheless had a pretty slim recorded output so far. *Tomorrow*

*Night* is only his second record – and his first one billed with his backing band the Band of Demons – and it doubles down on the sort of catchy, homespun likeability that made his debut *The Opening Act* an underrated pleasure over a half-decade ago. Despite the band's name, a thunderous Charlie Daniels cover is about as devilish as things get here: Talbert's writing is kind, earnest, sometimes deadpan funny, and his voice is more reminiscent of the warm twang of a Pat Green or Willy Braun than Ozzy Osbourne. A home studio project with little outside input, the record still feels appealingly full and well-rounded thanks to the tavern-tested instrumental chops and ragged harmonies that give the common-man sentiments of "Nobody" or "Southbound Train" the extra punch they deserve and flesh out the subtler likes of "Turn the Lights Down Low" without overwhelming the pretty simplicity of the melody. Extra points for the title track, a wisely low-key tribute to common soldiers that captures the stoicism and weariness of the job while still nailing the salute.

– **MIKE MESSICK**

## Kat Edmonson

### *The Big Picture*

Sony



Kat Edmonson's built a cult following around her cherubic, jazz-inflected songs. And while she's always used the colorful harmonies and clever lyrical melodies of jazz

and American popular song, at her core she's a jazz-influenced pop artist, and *The Big Picture* finds her fully embracing those sensibilities. If her 2012 album, *Way Down Low*, found her moving even further afield from the cabaret jazz of 2009's *Take to the Sky*, this album reveals another evolution toward an all-original approach. Working with producer Mitchell Froom, Edmonson wrote or co-wrote all the songs on the album, and Froom frames her lilting, Billie Holiday-meets-Blossom Dearie vocals with the kind of '50s and '60s traditional pop sound that Edmonson lightly flirted with on *Way Down Low*. There's a charming, vintage vibe to many tracks, with Edmonson striking a nice balance between cuts that have a retro, orchestral AM pop sound, such as the swinging ballad "Oh My Love," and a more contemporary folk sound, as on the poignant "All the Way." Elsewhere, Edmonson delves into Ennio Morricone spaghetti Western drama ("You Can't Break My Heart"), breezy '60s lounge music ("Avion"), and Brill Building echo-chamber romanticism ("For Two"). Ultimately, by bringing all of her influences together, Edmonson's own unmistakable sound comes into focus on *The Big Picture*. – **MATT COLLAR**

## Roger Sellers

### *Primitives*

Self-Released



The word that comes to mind when listening to Roger Sellers' debut full-length, *Primitives*, may be "blossoming." Described by some critics as a human

Rube Goldberg machine, Sellers spins psychedelic chain reactions of sounds that evoke everything from spring flowers to the births of stars – a frenetic feast for the ears a la Sufjan Stevens, Ratatat and Animal Collective. Each song begins with a simple loop of organs, bells or guitar, adding layer upon layer until it grows into a grand sonic tapestry of breezy vocals, spiraling synths and drum beats. The serene, six-and-a-half-minute opener "Intro" kicks off the adventure with a wash of spacey organs and waterfall sounds, before segueing into the bright, tinkling bells of "Appeals." Some songs, like "Appeals" and "Spectrolite," are pure swirls of kinetic energy, while others, most notably "Marim," sound more like they belong in some kind of mysterious ancient ritual, complete with haunting chants and tribal stomps. Each song on *Primitives* melts effortlessly into the next, like a stream-of-consciousness poem, where the grand scheme of things feels greater than each individual part. Although each track can certainly stand alone, the beauty is in experiencing the album as a whole, and the journey is well worth many repeat listens.

– **ALLIE EISSLER**



## Q&A Steve Young

[news](#)  
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[calendar](#)  
click here to read

[releases](#)  
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An almost unwilling midwife to the Outlaw Movement that came to be personified by Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Tompall Glaser, Jessie Coulter and David Allan Coe, Steve Young is the stuff of lore and legend. Young wasn't exactly one of the rebellious gaggle of Texans – Guy Clark, Townes Van Zandt, Richard Dobson, Steve Earle, Rodney Crowell – who left Texas for Nashville, most of them at Mickey Newbury's urging, but Young was welcomed into their midst almost as a father figure even though his had been a much different path.

Born in Alabama in 1942, Young left Beaumont for New York in the early '60s and then on to California. He fell in with like-minded free-thinkers like Gram Parsons, Gene Clark and Van Dyke Parks, who were taking country rock from cult status to mainstream.

Eventually Young wound up in Nashville, and while his albums never made much of a sales splash, people began to cut his tunes. His most well-known songs include "Seven Bridges Road," recorded by the Eagles in 1980, "Lonesome, On'ry and Mean," which Waylon Jennings turned into the theme song for the Outlaw Movement, and "Montgomery in the Rain," a hit for Hank Williams Jr.

### Can you shed a bit of light on those teenage years in Beaumont?

I was big into folk and bluegrass, Appalachian, blues, and I had this little group. That was about the only way to be cool in Beaumont, which we all considered to be the armpit of the world. I had these songs, and I'd go by Cowboy Jack Clement's studio and bug him, but he wasn't interested in folk music. Then some group like the Brothers Four had a hit, so Jack called one day and asked me to bring the band over and we cut my first record. I think it was 1960.

### Do you remember the song?

Leadbelly's "Bring Me A Little Water, Sylvie." The B-side was "Hummingbird" by Les Paul and Mary Ford.

### This was well before Clement became legendary. Did you see greatness in him?

I wouldn't say that – I was only 19. What impressed me was that here was this grown man who was willing to actually argue with a green kid like we were equals. He wanted drums, and I was a folkie, kind of a purist, so I thought drums were a bad thing. But I'm pretty sure we went back in there and added some drums. [Laughs]

### That Leadbelly song isn't what most people probably think of as folk.

I've always called myself a folk singer, but the blues is in all my music. It's like the foundation of a house.



### You got to California just in time to catch the first wave of country rock.

I actually went to New York and caught the folk scene going on there first, then I moved to California, where I started getting stoned like everyone else and put together this band called Stone Country. Yeah, that was pretty subtle, huh? We did one album, then I got a deal on my own with A&M Records and did *Rock Salt and Nails*, which was roughly half covers and half songs of mine. That's the album "Seven Bridges Road" was first on. I had Gram Parsons, Gene Clark and Chris Hillman on the album. We were all pretty tight back then.

### The Eagles recorded that one, so some serious mailbox money began to roll in?

Not as much as you'd think. I had a really bad publishing deal. We were all young and dumb – we almost gave the songs away, like Natives trading a few beads for their land. I'd run hot and cold on whether I actually liked that song, and we weren't even going to cut that tune because the producer, Tommy LiPuma, wanted nothing but covers ... just me interpreting songs. But we ran out of songs, and James Burton told Tommy the song was ready and sounded good, so we cut it. But not much happened with that album.

### But you still got a deal with RCA Nashville. You don't seem like the type of act they'd chase.

The whole outlaw thing had started, and Roy Dea believed he could do an album with me that would work, and he kept pitching that at RCA. No one else had much faith in it. We did two albums, but nobody really cared. I was already getting way out there with the drinking, and coke started coming on strong about then in Nashville. I was a mess. Roy believed in me, but Chet Atkins and those other guys didn't. Personally, I think Chet Atkins had no taste at all ... no interest in much of anything new or a bit different. I'm proud of those records, but I was never going to be a country star with the attitude and habits I had. But one funny thing did come out of it: I cut Willie's "It's Not Supposed to Be That Way" with Tracy Nelson singing backup. I was talking to Waylon one day and he said, "Hoss, you kicked me and Willie's ass with that version of yours."

### What was it like when you first heard Waylon's version of "Lonesome, On'ry and Mean"?

Without a doubt my favorite cut of any song of mine that anyone's done. I wrote it as a bluegrass song about what it might be like to play clean, to straighten up. But Waylon changed it to 4/4 time and just put a completely different spin on it. To this day, I'm still not sure Waylon ever understood what the song is about.

### You don't seem like a Nashville guy, but you've lived there for years.

People tell me all the time I seem more like an Austin guy, but a lot of musicians in Austin seemed sloppy and unprofessional back then. Maybe I was wound too tight or something, but that probably kept me from moving there. And now there's no way I'd want to live there, even though Nashville is becoming more like Austin every day with growth and traffic and gentrification. I actually hear people saying Nashville's hip now. That'll be the day.

– WILLIAM MICHAEL SMITH