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Sunday, February 15, 2009

Happy post-Valentine's Day Side One: Track One-rs, I hope your night was full of overpriced wine and marathon love making. In the spirit of the Holiday, I have a bit of commercialized love on the playlist, and some great new tracks from Austin bands both young and old.

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### Wideawake - *Something That We Can't Let Go*

I think I heard once that P. Diddy had a playlist on his iPod specifically set aside for "bangin'." And while I won't indulge in the long-winded joke that the idea warrants, I will say that this song should probably be on yours.

Wideawake, who are now returning from a three year hiatus, have that anthemic heart-on-fire sound that makes you want to say "Oh I'm so glad JD and Eliot are back together again, now let's see some sideboob!", which is no surprise since the band's music has been featured in shows like *Scrubs* and *Grey's Anatomy* (and, Lord willing, *Gossip Girl* in the near future). Choice lyrics from *Higher*, track one on *Something That We Can't Let Go*, include "This heart will come alive when we reach the other side". It's not exactly deep stuff, but Wideawake are experts at what they do, and sometimes we all need saccharine love songs to simplify this whole complicated "love" thing.

Of course, whether Wideawake can take your relationship beyond the missionary position, I can't definitively say.

[:Wideawake - Higher:](#)

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### The Soldier Thread - *Shapes*

It's been a while since we heard much from The Soldier Thread. They took the Austin music scene by storm last year with their debut EP *Fevers and Fireworks*, but despite the eager energy the band seemed to radiate in their early days, the EP felt somewhat formulaic and underdeveloped, at least for a band that put on such

an impressive live show. *Shapes* changes all that: A new producer (Lars Goransson of What Made Milwaukee Famous and The Cardigans) under the hood gave the band's soaring melodies room to grow. So far as I can tell, the entire album was recorded live, and I can't stress enough how wonderful that news is. Where *Fevers and Fireworks* felt digital and cold, the music of *Shapes* breathes with a warm life that finally compliments the band's ambitions, and I doubt that either they or I could be happier. Combining digital elements of synthesizers and samplers with the old-school glory of a string quartet can be difficult, but The Soldier Thread pull of the feat with obvious skill. *Shapes* stands as a vivid testament to that skill.

:The Soldier Thread - Cannons:

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## Johnny Goudie - *El Payaso*

With a name like Johnny Goudie, you'd think it would be all but obvious that your life's calling was to open a 50's-revival burger joint; but alas, for Mr. Goudie that's hardly the case. The latest addition to Goudie's varied career as artist and producer is this shiny new album, *El Payaso* (Spanish for "The Clown"). Sharing producer credits are Jonas Wilson (*Lovely Sparrows*, etc.), Lars Goransson (who produced the new Soldier Thread album, remember) and Goudie himself. As with The Soldier Thread's *Shapes*, *El Payaso* allows Goudie plenty of wide-open space to fill with jangly instrumentation and revivalist guitar riffs that ends up sounding a bit like the collaborative efforts of other Austin band Zookeeper from a few years back. This track, *Can't Pretend Forever*, has that feel-good quality that makes you want to roll down the window and work on that left-arm tan. Luckily, you can't beat February in Texas for nice down-window weather.

:Johnny Goudie - Can't Pretend Forever:

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We're well into 2009 and the good Austin music has been flowing in. Stay tuned for more and remember to hit the candy aisle today, chocolate prices are at a 12-month low.

*John Michael Cassetta keeps his own blog, Big Diction, and writes for the local website Austin Sound. Comments, complaints, and solicitations may be directed [here](#).*

- John Michael Cassetta - [Comments](#)

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