

New Music Though Old Ears — Aaradhna Robinson, Good Tyler

By *John Turnbull*

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It's time for some new music as entertainment editor [John Turnbull](#) checks out recent releases from beardy folkies The Chris Robinson Brotherhood, soul diva Aaradhna, talent-show punks Good Charlotte and walking leatherwear Steven Tyler!

New Album from a New Artist

Aaradhna — Brown Girl

Born in Wellington, New Zealand in 1983, [Aaradhna Jayantilal Patel](#) grew up listening to a combination of traditional Samoan music from her mother and Bollywood songs from her father, instilling in her a love of music that drove her life path.

Aaradhna started writing music at the age of

11, made it to the finals of her first talent quest at 13 and was kicked out of her school choir for rebelling shortly afterwards. She sang the hook on the Adeaze hit [Getting Stronger](#) in 2004 and released her debut album *I Love You* in 2006. This album included the single [They Don't Know](#) (featuring Savage), and was followed by the cover disc *Sweet Soul Music* where Aaradhna covered classics by artists including the Jackson 5, Stevie Wonder and Marvin Gaye.

Brown Girl is Aaradhna's 4th studio album, finding inspiration in her Samoan and Indian roots. There is a heavy vein of protest music running through *Brown Girl*, as Aaradhna takes aim at all of the people who judge her based on the colour of her skin rather than who she really is. From the opening menace of *Welcome To The Jungle* (not a GnR cover) through evocative the title track and the melancholy *I Don't Know*, this album harkens back to the days of [Woodie Guthrie](#) and [Bob Dylan](#), using beautiful songs to highlight social injustice.

It's not all doom and gloom, though, as Aaradhna brings a cheeky vibe to tracks like *Drunken Heart*, *Smokey mind* and *Messin Around*. Well worth a listen.

Standout tracks: *Brown Girl*, *Welcome to the Jungle*, *Drunken Heart*, *Smokey Mind*

Sample lyric: 'I'm choosing visions that work

for my reasons, but still, I don't know.' (I Don't Know)

Verdict: 8/10 — a beautiful voice unafraid of speaking out against injustice

New Album from an Old Artist

Chris Robinson Brotherhood — Anyway You Love, We Know How You Feel

You may remember Chris Robinson from The Black Crowes, the southern blues rockers responsible for such barn-burners as Remedy and their great cover Otis Redding classic Hard to Handle. A fan of the hobo beard before they became trendy, Robinson is one of those artists who found their voice early and hasn't changed a huge amount since then.

Formed after the second (and possibly permanent) Black Crowes hiatus in 2010, [Chris Robinson Brotherhood](#) released their first album, Big Moon Ritual, in June 2012. Just three months later, the band released a second album, The Magic Door, which suggested to some that they weren't really putting a lot of effort into post-production. Third album, Phosphorescent Harvest, came out in 2014, featuring a psychedelic rock bent and a wistful longing for all things freaky and Sixties.

Anyway You Love is a rambling sort of affair, bluesy and laid back. Full of literary references and seven minutes songs, this feels like an album designed to be listened to around a campfire following an afternoon hiking up a mountain and maybe taking some magic mushrooms. Gone are the funky jams of The Black Crowes, replaced by lilting piano and understated guitar, capturing a mood of melancholy regret.

If you're in the right mood, this album could be great, but it didn't really land with me after a couple of listens, and one track seems to blur

into the next. CRB definitely have some talent, but there is a distinct lack of spark on this album.

Standout tracks: Narcissus Soaking Wet, but only because it's the first track...

Sample lyric: 'I'm fully loaded, and you've got the keys.' (Leave My Guitar Alone)

Verdict: 5/10 — somewhat generic Southern Blues without the bite

Album I Expect to Suck

Good Charlotte — Youth Authority

While they were never really considered an authentic punk band by people who care about that sort of thing, Good Charlotte have carved out a reasonable career as tween-friendly pop-punks and seemingly-conjoined talent show judges. Formed in Maryland in 1996, the band released five remarkably similar albums before going on hiatus in 2011.

While the 2000 self-titled release was short on hits, sophomore release The Young and the Hopeless stumbled onto a formula for radio friendly pop punk, typified by singles [Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous](#) and The Anthem. Follow up The Chronicles of Life & Death (2004) added in a touch of social commentary, but this confused a few tween fans so 2007's Good Morning Revival reverted to type and was rewarded by massive selling singles [Dance Floor Anthem](#) and [Keep Your Hands Off My Girl](#).

After spending a few years dashing young singers dreams on Australian Idol, the Madden brothers have put the band back together and produced the most generic, predictable pop punk imaginable. There are a couple of songs that seem custom-made to be hits, including the odious yet oddly catchy 40 oz. Dream and the mind-numbingly simplistic War, which makes the Springsteen track of

the same name seem like the height of lyrical prowess.

While the Madden brothers have always had the ear for a catchy hook, even these seem to be few and far between on Youth Authority. Instead we have a collection of lazy, tossed-off tracks that sound like a poor-man's Blink 182 in their "we all hate each other" years. The only highlight is Reason to Stay, featuring Simon Neil from Biffy Clyro, but even he's not talented enough to save this mess...

Standout tracks: Reason to Stay

Sample lyric: 'Grew up on MTV, when they had Eazy-E, in California yeah, they still knew how to throw a party.' (40 oz. Dream)

Verdict: 2/10 — almost unlistenable

Ch-check it out...

Steven Tyler — We're All Somebody From Somewhere

You might remember [Steven Tyler](#) from Aerosmith, the southern blues rockers responsible for such hits as Janie's Got a Gun, Crazy and the classic Run DMC duet Walk This Way. Wait, didn't I already write this review?

Rising to fame in the 1970s with musical and substance partner-in-crime [Joe Perry](#), Tyler somehow avoided an early demise and has gone on to become one of rock's elder statesman, collaborating with whoever he wants, appearing in movies and managing to appear as a judge on American Idol without totally losing his credibility. He has been inducted into the Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame and been named by Rolling Stone as one of the 100 Greatest Singers of All Time.

Bearing a number of striking similarities to Anyway You Love (aside from the overlong

title), We're All Somebody was originally pitched by Tyler as a country album, but it didn't really turn out that way. While there are definitely some country influences there, particularly later in the album, We're All Somebody sounds a lot like the Blues Rock that Aerosmith have been making for the last 46 or so years.

In contrast to CRB, credit must be given to Tyler for trying some new things, like the gothic Hold On and Train-esque I Make My Own Sunshine. In fact, when Tyler is upbeat, We're All Somebody is a lot of fun, but when he slows the pace down things really start to drag.

Standout tracks: We're All Somebody From Somewhere, I Make My Own Sunshine

Sample lyric: 'It ain't easy, when you're out there searchin', tryin' to find the one.' (It Ain't Easy)

Verdict: 6/10 — a mixed bag, but worth a listen for Aerosmith fans

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