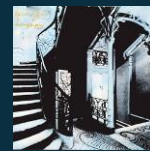




DANDIEGO RECORD OF THE MONTH



May 2026

Mayflowers, Nina's Pinta's and Santa Maria's

I hope you all are keeping an eye on those New York Knickerbockers! I think this is it – it's finally our year. As a Mets and Knicks fan, I have not been alive to see a championship team. Well – I wouldn't call myself a Mets *fan* anymore, per say. After 33 years of misery I finally abandoned them midseason in 2024. It was the last game before the Allstar break, Mets in town to play the Padres, Scherzer vs Musgrove. An absolute lock. I think I had \$800 on the Mets and Scherzer gave up like 5 home runs, 3 of which were back to back to back and we got absolutely smoked, and completely collapsed in the second half of the season to miss the playoffs. Who wouldn't want to sign up for 33 years of that?

Anyway, I feel like Michael Scott when Dunder Mifflin caught fire because "it's happening, it's happening!" We're finally doing it. This month, we are looking at **Mazzy Star's *She Hangs Brightly***. It is pretty well known your boy loves Mazzy Star. This band made music the way it's supposed to be made. There were only ever 4 albums completed and distributed – *She Hangs Brightly* (90), *So Tonight That I Might See* (93), *Among My Swan* (96), and then obscurely *Seasons of your Day* (13). I don't know much about *Seasons of your Day*, and I'll be giving it a listen shortly, but with a 17 year gap I definitely have some questions. Fun Fact – this album was released on May 21st 1990, and turned 36 yesterday. Yeah, say that again. It's been almost 40 years since 1990. May 21st 1991 is also a dear friend of mine's birthday - so this one worked on a few levels.

This is one of those band's where the band is pretty much just the lead singer – Hope Sandoval. I mean, a 5'0 cute Latina with a kind hushed voice, feel for range, and understanding of emotion – what's not to like? I really think the band does a fantastic job of quantifying the 90s. I think that's more in hindsight, and to them they were just making music. But most of the songs on this album fall into one of two categories – Soft Happiness or Gentle Frantic. If you've been with us for a while, I think controlled chaos in music is just awesome. I have a weird relation with chaos – because I do think in moderation it can be healthy. When you are not completely in control – in the right setting – you can find areas of yourself you might otherwise not consciously allow yourself to explore. Now, a lot of times after I've had a chaotic experience, that *usually* isn't the outcome. But even the no-good, lousy, stinkin' *Metropolitans* get a hit 1 in every 5 tries. Mazzy on the other hand, makes it look cool and easy. Hope seems a master in surrendering, and almost blindly, going with the wind.

The album opens with 3 consecutive *soft happiness* tracks. *Halal* is probably the most well known track on the album. It was I believe the first single released from the album. It's one of those that brought me to the album in the first place - before I was up on that Mazzy – but then did eventually lose a little of it's ring to me after a ton of plays. Like when you like a song on your streaming platform and listen to it way more than anything on the album because it works it's way into your shuffle and recommended playlists while other un "liked" tracks don't. Sidebar – I do believe it is in best practice in music as with most things – to enjoy in moderation. I've got quite a few tracks historically that are really awesome tracks, but I just play them too much when I first find them that they ultimately lose a bit of their shine. I've started skipping these tracks sporadically so as to savor their sound and support their longevity. Anyway – starts with three tracks that are soft happy, and then the title track *She Hangs Brightly* cracks the seal for gentle frantic. When I say gentle frantic, I envision a plastic bag in a breeze. The bag itself is lite, and floats around softly flailing, but a slight gust of wind can send it jerking and almost convulsing. But it never really blows away, it floats around kind of spazzing, maybe a little confused, maybe like when you start to lose control of your limbs in a dream. But the ceiling for craziness never seems that high. Like the worst that could happen with the bag is it falls out of the air and lands gently on the ground, or, is blown away, but still ultimately landing softly somewhere.



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That is probably my favorite brand of music. It's cool, edgy, a little bit dark, but still balanced, maintained, and artistic. I think Peter Griffin actually alludes to something similar so I'll stop myself there. But like, when one of these tracks starts, I feel an uplift in my chest. Like I'm stoked to be a part of what she's doing. I think Ghost Highway is my favorite track on this album, and highlights what I'm trying to say here. Some other tracks that give this feel would be Into Dust, So That Tonight I Might See, and Roseblood.

Conversely, I think the two tracks on the album that kind of align with who I am as a person are Give You My Lovin, and Be My Angel. I will leave those allegories to the reader to interpret, but in listening to the album in preparation for this write up, those seemed to stick to me the most.

I do have So That Tonight I Might See on vinyl, and I am planning on getting this one too. One commonality all the albums have whenever I listen to them start to finish is that they always feel like they're over too soon. They're all pretty average in terms of track count and album duration. So pretty much they're all good albums and leave you wanting more, as any good album/artist should. I love when someone or something that isn't traditional can do something well. Women in rock and roll are by no means scarce, but to see Hope rock the way she does, I think, is just really cool. I would give a lot of things to have been in a small venue in 1995 (as an adult) and see her get a crowd going, heads banging, beer sloshing, lighters flicking. But then she always reigns it in and mellows out – which shows she really is in control and knows what she's doing. This album in specific, gets a bit wild and wavy with Ghost Highway, but then cools back down with Free, and then almost intentionally mellows out with Before I Sleep. This is a fun thought prompt for me – because as an artist, I often obsess over small details that someone just casually looking would probably not catch. But someone who is an artist themselves, and knows what they are looking at, might truly appreciate.

I also think it is pretty cool that they didn't oversaturate their music. It's getting a lot of usage in TV Series and Movies at the moment – I can think of like 4 shows that Into Dust or Fade Into You is in off the top of my head. But there are just those 4 albums, 1 of which was 17 years after the other 3. It's like Barry Sanders – one of the NFL's greatest running backs ever. He only played 10 seasons, all with the Detroit Lions, and is still 4th on the all time rushing yards list. Ironically – Barry also holds the record for most rushes for negative yardage. He used to run back and forth, left and right, whatever – that *schoolyard bullsheit*. But it worked. He retired on top, healthy, and remembered as a Pro's Pro. I think Mazzy Star reflects a similar sentiment in this capacity. Mazzy's Vinyls are actually pretty rare, hence why we're just doing one now. But this one is available at the moment. If you don't get it on vinyl – definitely give it a real listen on your streaming platforms.

While we're here, one of my oldest friends – Dan Kelvas – and his wife Trisha just welcomed their first child to the world. Colton Anthony Kelvas was born Saturday May 17th at 7:11pm and is just perfect. I've attached the photo I have of Dan and Colton. Best wishes to them as they begin this new leg of their journey together!

Keep it Surreal,

Dan Diego



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Past ROTMs:

November 2023: Desire, I Want to Turn Into You – Caroline Polachek

December 2023: Depression Cherry – Beach House

January 2024: MTV Unplugged Live from New York – Nirvana

February 2024: Actual Life 2 – Fred Again..

March 2024: Music from the LOTR Trilogy – The City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra

April 2024: Greatest Hits: Volume 1 – James Taylor

May 2024: Hybrid Theory – Linkin Park

June 2024: Ursa Major – Third Eye Blind

July 2024: Live 1997 – Daft Punk

August 2024: White Ladder, Live in Austin – David Gray

September 2024: Tidal – Fiona Apple

October 2024: Kid A – Radiohead

November 2024: Alive 2007 – Daft Punk

December 2024: Ten – Pearl Jam

January 2025: Balloonerism – Mac Miller

February 2025: Ceremonials – Florence + The Machine

March 2025: Narrow Stairs – Death Cab for Cutie

April 2025: Pang – Caroline Polachek

May 2025: 4:44 – Jay-Z

June 2025: Third Eye Blind – Third Eye Blind

July 2025: Live from Joshua Tree – Rufus Du Sol

August 2025: Magic – Bruce Springsteen

September 2025: Push the Button – The Chemical Brothers



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October 2025: Mac Miller – NPR Tiny Desk

November 2025: LEAVE OF ABSENCE

December 2025: Your Top Songs 2025 – DanDiego

January 2026: This Is All Yours – alt-J

February 2026: Sticks and Stones – New Found Glory

March 2026: Us Against the Crown – State Radio

April 2026: Loyal to the Game – 2Pac

May 2026: She Hangs Brightly – Mazzy Star