



ONLINE EXCLUSIVE

ZYZZYVA STAFF RECOMMENDS JUNE 2021: WHAT TO READ, WATCH, & LISTEN TO

ZYZZYVA STAFF

Because humanity just can't catch a break this year: as the month of June comes to a close, many parts of the Pacific Northwest are facing record high temperatures. It's imperative we all stay inside, stay cool, and stay safe. And just in case you need something to read, watch, or listen to while you're avoiding the heat, we've got you covered with this month's Staff Recommends. So, hey, let's get to it!



Anna DeNelsky, *Intern*: Slow Pulp’s indie pop album *Moveys* is the perfect soundtrack to feed your bout of summertime sadness. With ample downtime during the pandemic, my music library expanded tenfold, and I stumbled upon Slow Pulp, who have since earned a spot on my current list of Top 5 favorite bands.

The Chicago-based band’s distinctly hazy and atmospheric sound provides the perfect backdrop for heavy contemplation and introspection. Released in 2020 during the midst of the pandemic, the album encapsulates a state of uncertainty, yet conveys a rather comfortable acceptance of said uncertainty as a form of resilience. The album unveils the beauty of imperfection, exploring themes of relationships, mental and physical health, trauma, and a processing of one’s existence and place in the world. Their music is both sonically and emotionally textured—the quality of the sound furthering the lyrical import.

Slow Pulp’s rather concise lyrics speak volumes; each word feels carefully selected, a poetic approach to songwriting: “Why don’t you go back/To falling apart?/You were so good at that” sings Massey in “Falling Apart,” one of my personal favorite songs on the album. “You have got to step up/Show that you can be enough/Make it okay/It’s hard to swallow.” This candid pensiveness is woven throughout the songwriting.

Emily Massey's warm vocals are layered with vulnerability and are melded into the instrumentals, giving the songs an ethereal yet grounded tone. The band's music is the medium and outlet through which they meditate on the navigation of life—a coping strategy of sorts—allowing the listener to do the same. The first track, “New Horse” acts as a foreword for the album; the band invites the listener to journey with them into the past year and reflect on their experiences and growth. “Idaho,” one of their most played songs on Spotify, is one I unapologetically play on repeat. It considers the struggle of receiving love when one lacks self-love: “I kept on holding out for the downside...I don't think I can win my pride on time.” Each track has something unique to offer, while serving as an essential component of the cohesive unit.

By the end of the album the band has managed to create a channel through which they vent and cope, and in turn provide the listener with the same outlet, as they relate to and form new associations between their own lives and the music. The last track propels the listener out of a nostalgic trance: a playful, Beastie Boys-esque groove, layered with vinyl scratching and a voice that calls out, “I said move it/Get outta here.” Then the credits roll, the movie is over, and we are returned to reality to find our own path in the maze of life. Slow Pulp is currently making it big in the indie music scene—and I eagerly await what's to come.