



ONLINE EXCLUSIVE

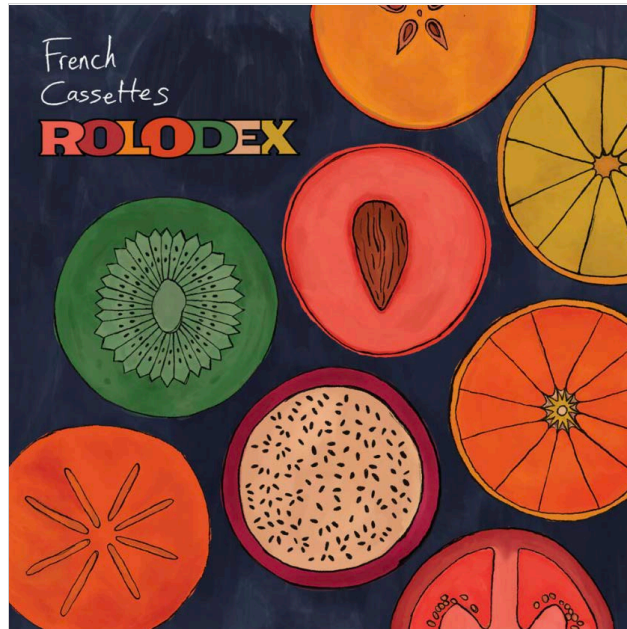
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# ZYZZYVA STAFF RECOMMENDS JULY 2021: WHAT TO READ, WATCH, & LISTEN TO

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ZYZZYVA STAFF

*With the Delta variant running amok in San Francisco and elsewhere, the great indoors are looking more and more inviting with each day. Fortunately, we're back with a Staff Recommends that offers plenty of books to read and music to listen to while we wait out the dog days of summer.*



*Anna DeNelsky, Intern:* As an indie singer-songwriter, discovering new artists and bands is a daily hobby of mine. This month's top discovery: French Cassettes.

Hailing from the Bay Area, French Cassettes is a hidden gem that deserves more recognition. After a seven year hiatus, the band released *Rolodex* in December of 2020 and successfully re-entered the music scene. Consisting of eight tracks, *Rolodex* is filled with mellow, yet upbeat summertime tunes. The album's relaxed and charming indie-pop sound is enriched by catchy melodies and hooks, making the music extremely palatable. They experiment with layering clean and fuzzy guitar sounds as well as intricate vocal harmonies.

French Cassettes' lyrics are specific and quirky, invoking a kind of calm contemplation. "I float entirely off the ground sometimes/Depending on where you're standing," sings Scott Huerta in "Sunday Soda." There is a sense of freedom and wanderlust both sonically and lyrically as the band reflects on growing up, relationships, identity, and the subtleties and hiccups of daily life. As the band puts it themselves, Huerta's lyrics "are often presented as semi-autobiographical puzzles." His lyrics are

both detailed and eclectic, often leaping from one thought to the next. In “Utah,” one of my personal favorite songs on the album, the band meditates on the concept of change in terms of physically re-locating and how that may spark inner or emotional change. “I wish I could reset the mood for you/We could do the things that we used to do/You’ll know it when I go with someone/What do you mean I’m gone?”

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By the end of the album, French Cassettes has successfully defined their own sound; no song feels forgotten and the album truly functions as a cohesive unit. As Huerta describes on the band’s Spotify page, “I adopted the mentality, which was probably unhealthy, that every song I wrote needed to be my favorite song...I lost my mind so many times in the middle of the night.” Huerta’s sentiment is definitely visible in all his songwriting on this album. I sincerely hope that French Cassettes takes a far shorter hiatus this time around, as they have left me wanting more.