

The Playlist: Shawn Mendes's Exuberant Heartache, and 9 More New Songs

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Shawn Mendes's new single is the broken-hearted "If I Can't Have You." Quique Garcia/EPA, via Shutterstock



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Every Friday, pop critics for The New York Times weigh in on the week's most notable new songs and videos. Just want the music? [Listen to the Playlist on Spotify here](#) (or find our profile: [nytimes](#)). Like what you hear? Let us know at theplaylist@nytimes.com and [sign up for our Louder newsletter](#), a once-a-week blast of our pop music coverage.

Shawn Mendes, 'If I Can't Have You'

A few years into his career, Shawn Mendes is becoming a bard of the forlorn. As on the best songs from his [2018 self-titled album](#), new single “If I Can't Have You” is about failing to grab what you wish was yours:

I'm in Toronto and I got this view
But I might as well be in a hotel room
It doesn't matter 'cause I'm so consumed
Spending all my nights reading texts from you

Written by Mendes with Scott Harris, Teddy Geiger and Nate Mercereau (and produced by Mendes and Geiger), this is an exuberant expression of desolation, with melodies and hooks as ecstatic as Abba. JON CARAMANICA

Rhiannon Giddens, 'Gonna Write Me a Letter'

Is there anything [Rhiannon Giddens](#) can't sing? Her new album, "There is No Other," is a duo project with Francesco Turrisi, a pianist who also plays a global assortment of string and percussion instruments. "Gonna Write Me a Letter," written by the Appalachian folk singer Ola Belle Reed, is a lament for a sailor away at sea. Giddens and Turrisi move it to the Middle East, with an unchanging modal vamp and an ancient North African drum called the bendir, and — especially in the final plea to "Come home, come home" — Giddens sings it with inflections that bridge mountains and deserts.

PARELES

K.Flax, 'This Baby Don't Cry'

With a post-punk bass line backing her up, K.Flay methodically tosses aside feminine stereotypes — “I used to think about the way that I dressed/Like was I pretty enough, and am I good at sex” — and stacks up handclaps, guitars and noise behind her gleeful autonomy. PARELES

Logic featuring Eminem, ‘Homicide’

This would have been an incredible single on Rawkus in 1998. CARAMANICA

Joel Ross, ‘Is It Love That Inspires You?’

The vibraphonist Joel Ross is only in his mid-20s, and looks even younger, but he's already widely known as contemporary jazz's top prospect. "Kingmaker," his major-label debut, out now on Blue Note, shows that he has what it takes to build something vital on the over-farmed terrain of mainstream jazz, largely by reckoning with conflicting histories. His compositions seem to pick up on the streetwise, slithering approach that [Roy Hargrove](#) put down in the 1990s, while adding ideas from the music's past 20 years: Lush, balladic harmonies give way to snappy post-bop swing, then fluttering, busted hip-hop beats. And in his solos, you'll hear the proud clarity of Milt Jackson and the counterintuition of Bobby Hutcherson, but — as on the bounding "Is It Love That Inspires You?" which features Ross with only the bassist Benjamin Tiberio and the drummer Jeremy Dutton — he's liable to spin off into a multidirectional hail of notes, at once centrifugal and forthright, in a style like no one else's. RUSSONELLO

Ingrid Andress, 'More Hearts Than Mine'

Girl falls for boy. Takes boy home to meet her family. Family embraces him. Relationship sours. Girl and boy split. Everyone's disappointed: "If I bring you home to mama/I guess I better warn you/She feels every heartache I go through." Ingrid Andress's piano ballad is an elegantly written song about a love that lets you down that sounds like a tragedy even at the beginning, when there's still hope. CARAMANICA

10k.Caash featuring Matt Ox, 'Kerwin Frost Scratch That'

10k.Caash featuring GUN40, 'Aloha'

This week, Dallas shout-rapper 10k.Caash released “Kerwin Frost Scratch That” (a collaboration with the feral young rapper Matt Ox), basically a hardcore song of a hip-hop track that’s reminiscent of the earliest Beastie Boys mosh anthems. He also put out a video for the recent single “Aloha,” which smushes together early Odd Future pastel absurdity, Dallas rap viscosity, SoundCloud rap distortion (remember that?) and the hilarious confidence of someone who still can’t quite believe rapping is his job.

CARAMANICA

Sam Ospovat, ‘Kim’s Line’

“Ride Angles,” the debut album from the drummer Sam Ospovat, features seven prismatic, oddly seductive tunes inspired by the 12-tone modern

classical composers, the snarled energies of math rock and the rough-riding vigor of jazz improvising. Joined by the pianist Matt Mitchell and the bassist Kim Cass, Ospovat closes the album with “Kim’s Line,” a short, droll piece that sums up the entire record’s off-kilter allure in just 1 minute 20 seconds. **RUSSONELLO**

Moor Mother x Zonal, ‘On the Range’

Camae Ayewa, the poet and electronic musician who performs as Moor Mother, is abetted by the British electronic duo Zonal — Justin Broadrick from Godflesh and the producer Kevin “The Bug” Martin — for the buzzing, throbbing, twitching, crackling “On the Range,” vowing “You can’t lock me in, box me out” and “No fear on me, straight faced no tear on me.” It’s viscous, unhurried and implacable. **PARELES**