

ROUNDTABLE

MUSIC To Look out For This Summer

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While I'm still listening to Noah Kahan's "The Great Divide," three of my favorite pop girls are dropping music this summer that I can't wait for. First on May 22, Maisie Peters is releasing "Florescence" and if the singles she's released so far are any indication, the album should be a great mix of indie pop, and there's a Marcus Mumford feature I can't wait for.

In June, Olivia Rodrigo's "you see pretty sad for a girl so in love" comes out and although "drop dead" isn't my favorite song from Rodrigo I'm still hopeful that the album will deliver. And, announced just this week, Ariana Grande is officially releasing a new album in July. There's not much information yet besides its title ("petal") and that it'll be about healing, but I'm excited nonetheless. Lastly, Gracie Abrams has been teasing new music recently and I'm hoping we get some news soon.



PHOTO COURTESY OF @OLIVIA RODRIGO ON INSTAGRAM

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If there's one thing I am and always will be, it's an Olivia Rodrigo fan. I've been listening to her latest single "drop dead" repeatedly since it came out, and I absolutely cannot wait for "you seem pretty sad for a girl so in love" when the album drops on June 12. I've always enjoyed the extra level of rock edge she's added to her pop songs over the years, and I think "drop dead" is a sign that she might be evolving past it. It definitely reminds me of some of the songs on "Wishbone" by Conan Gray, and given the similarity in their covers, I think these two albums might end up being siblings.

Aside from Rodrigo, Ariana Grande's "petal" looks to be interesting. I've been operating under the assumption that after "Wicked," Grande might be returning to a more acting-focused career, but it seems I've been proven wrong! I'm not a regular listener of hers, but it'll be interesting to see where it goes.

Finally, Shaboozey is dropping "The Outlaw Cherie Lee & Other Western Tales" that same day on July 31. Now, I don't listen to Shaboozey, but I think the unprecedented success of "Topsy" means we ought to keep an eye on him. I'm curious to see if he plans to replicate that earlier success, if he'll take a different track or if he'll flop entirely. All we can do is wait!

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I don't usually listen to much pop music, but Olivia Rodrigo is a big exception. Her 2023 release, "GUTS," has only grown on me each year, especially with the additional deluxe tracks released in 2024. With her third album, "you seem pretty sad for a girl so in love," set to release on June 12, I've found myself anticipating another stellar project. The upbeat lead single, "drop dead," exceeded my expectations, especially compared to the ballads she usually starts her release cycles with. Most of all, I'm hoping to see more of the tongue-in-cheek lyricism that graced "GUTS" on this new project.

On the more indie side of things, I'm interested to see how The Strokes' upcoming album, "Reality Awaits," will turn out. The lead single, "Going Shopping," felt burdened by excess autotune on Julian Casablancas' voice, but I have hope for the rest of the track list. Considering how the band knocked it out of the ballpark with their 2020 comeback album, "The New Abnormal," you can never really count them out.

I'm also awaiting what the electronic duo Boards of Canada are cooking on "Inferno," which will be the first album release from the Scottish brothers Mike Sandison and Marcus Eoin since 2013. I just started listening to their music lately, and I really dig their sound when it's focused on ambient soundscapes and folktronica textures. They haven't dropped any singles yet, but the bits of teased music have sounded pretty great so far.

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"Stove." That's all I have to say. Or should I call it "The Right Person Will Stay" or even "Lasso?" Lana Del Rey has been teasing her new album for two years now, with several name changes before landing on the final "Stove." She initially marketed it as a country album, before its current southern-gothic description. For me, the name and date changes don't even matter, as long as she releases something that she thinks is near-perfect. Singles like "Henry Come On" and "Bluebird" were released in spring 2025, and I was not disappointed.

The album is now set to come out sometime in late spring or early summer after she told W Magazine in August 2025 that delays were due to the addition of six autobiographical tracks. "White Feather Hawk Tail Deer Hunter" debuted as an eerily seductive single accompanied by a homemade music video in February. Del Rey performed other tracks from the album, like "Husband of Mine," which may be the song I am most looking forward to, "Quiet in the South" and "57.5" at concerts last summer. "All About Ethel," a diss track aimed toward American singer Ethel Cain, was also teased in a snippet on Del Rey's Instagram last summer. I'm sorry Ethel (I am a huge fan of her as well), but I cannot wait to here to full thing to see who really is "the Most Famous Girl at the Waffle House."

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I'm looking forward to most of the music coming out this summer. However, I can't wait for Madonna's "Confessions II" to come out on July 3. I began listening to Madonna a few months ago, and I absolutely love her tunes. Her music videos are excellent, and her voice shines through in every song she sings. I'm not entirely sure what "Confessions II" will be like, but I have a feeling it's going to be amazing! Besides Madonna, I'm looking forward to Evanescence's "Sanctuary," which will be released on June 5. I've heard Evanescence is a great band, so their new album might be amazing as well. I'm also excited for Olivia Rodrigo's new album, "you seem pretty sad for a girl so in love." I haven't listened to a lot of Rodrigo's songs, but the ones I've listened to are gorgeous, so this album might be a stellar piece as well.

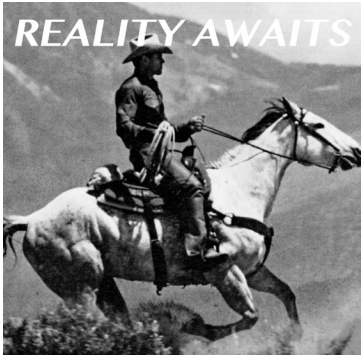


PHOTO COURTESY OF @THESTROKES ON INSTAGRAM

STAY COOL THIS SUMMER WITH THESE ARCTIC BOOK RECS

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Between days with nice breezes, cold drinks and plenty of air conditioning to spare, the stifling cloudless days of deep summer can be a struggle to get through. But what better route of escape is there than through literature? With these four books, you'll be able to step out of the sunburn and mosquitoes for a moment of glacial peace.

“Between days with nice breezes, cold drinks and plenty of air conditioning to spare, the stifling cloudless days of deep summer can be a struggle to get through.”

Book #1: “A Dream in Polar Fog” by Yuri Rytkheu
Unlike the vast majority of arctic survival novels out there, Yuri Rytkheu's "A Dream in Polar Fog" stands out for centering the life and culture of Indigenous Siberians. Set in the early 1900s, the book follows John MacLennan, a Canadian sailor who is abandoned by his crewmates in the Tundra when a freak accident with dynamite causes him to lose both of his hands. Cut off from his old world, John must build a new life with the Chukchi, an indigenous tribe in the easternmost reaches of Siberia. As John finds his new family and adopts Chukchi culture, the encroaching colonialism of

the United States, Canada and Russia pose new threats to the indigenous way of life. Rytkheu is a member of the Chukchi himself and is widely considered to be the father of Chukchi literature, and in this novel his love for his culture shines. For anyone interested in learning about the language, beliefs and daily habits of indigenous Siberians while enjoying a story of survival against the odds, this novel is a must-read.

“But what better route of escape is there than through literature?”

Book #2: “The Sun, My Father” by Nils-Aslak Valkeapää
“With these four books, you’ll be able to step out of the sunburn and mosquitoes for a moment of glacial peace.”

This poetry book is an homage to nature, the north and Sami culture, and an important landmark in Sami literature. Although many may not associate Europe with oppressed indigenous cultures, the Sami people, native to the northernmost reaches of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Western Russia, are a marginalized culture that have faced oppression and land dispossession for decades. In spite of these challenges, figures like Valkeapää continue to honor their roots through literature. The poems themselves air more on the avant-garde side,

they make for beautiful reflections on life, culture, music and the under-appreciated natural landscapes of the far North. My personal favorite poems in the collection are poems 38, 61 and 219. I highly recommend this book for anyone with a penchant for the abstract.

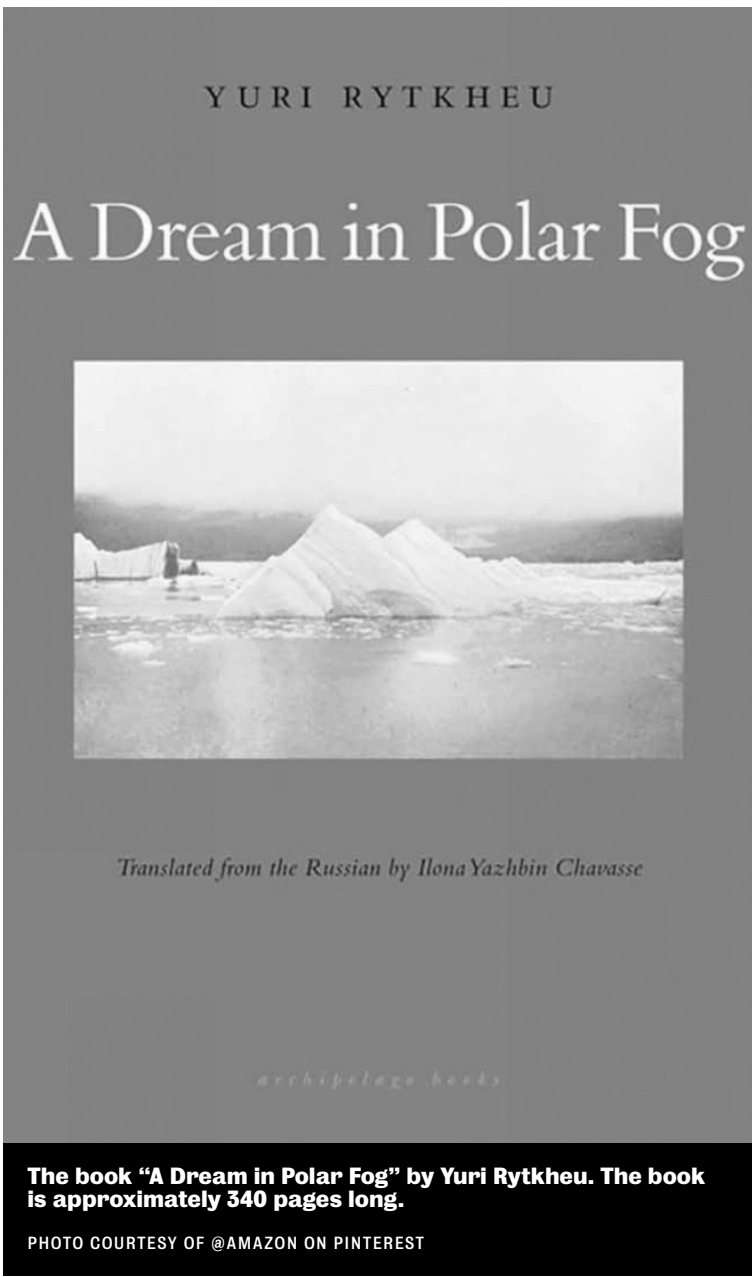
Book #3: “Last Night in Nuuk” by Niviaq Korneliussen
This is a 2010's novel that heavily features internet references, so one will have to forgive the many millennialisms prevalent throughout the text. "Last Night in Nuuk" is an edgy, yet heartfelt and incredibly vulnerable novel about queer life in Greenland. Written as a collection of hazy

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night-afters and lengthy text messages, the story follows Fia, a young Greenlander coming to terms with being a lesbian, her brother Inuk who flees Greenland for Denmark following a political scandal, Arnaq, a bisexual woman struggling with substance abuse, and Ivik and Sara, a formerly-lesbian couple whose relationship is rocked as Ivik comes out as a trans man.

Indigenous cultures are not museum pieces, but dynamic, living things, and Korneliussen's writing is a beautiful and emotional raw example of Greenlandic youth navigating their identities as Greenlanders in the modern world. Out of the few Greenlandic novels that have been translated to English, I recommend this one the most.

Book #4: “A Woman in



the Polar Night” by Christiane Ritter
This 1930s work is one of my favorite travel memoirs set in the Arctic. It tells the story of the Austrian woman Christiane Ritter as she abandons her cushy, middle-class life to live on Svalbard, an archipelago north of Europe and home to the northernmost human settlements on the planet. Ritter's expectations of a cozy, cabin environment are disturbed however, when she

realizes that her new home is a tiny, isolated cabin far away from any human settlement. And yet, as she's forced to survive through some of the most extreme trials that nature can throw at a person, she finds a sense of peace and admiration for the harsh, eternal Arctic night. This is a touching — and almost philosophical — story about isolation, survival and what it means to find fulfillment in the absence of societal expectations.