

5 ARTISTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

AMELIA WHITE BOSTON

Pursuing Promise with Passion

When **Amelia White** relocated to Nashville in the early 2000s, the Boston-bred musician immediately set out to connect with Music City's storied artistic community. "I judge my career by the work I've done, not by my level of fame or earnings," White, who quickly became known for her observational style of storytelling, says. "Don't get me wrong, I want more of the aforementioned, but I've always been in this as an artist, not a business person. I love to write songs, and I'm really proud of a lot of my work." White's latest effort, *Love I Swore*, is further proof that she's a superb singer-songwriter with an astute ability to create consistently memorable melodies. For *Love I Swore*, she enlisted the services of producer Kim Richey, the noted musician and longtime Yep Roc recording artist. And the resulting set touches on topics common to many—the struggle to maintain a steadfast relationship, loss and loneliness, and, in her case, the mindset of a road-weary musician. ("All I wanna do is get up there and sing/ I don't wanna hear about ice on the wing," she declares on "Get to the Show," one of the new album's many standout selections). White manages to imbue each of her offerings with passion and purpose, which, in turn, makes her work all the more pertinent. Granted she's stoic in a certain sense, but she also injects occasional self-effacing humor into her narratives. "I often wish we were living in a time when more artists would cover songs written by others because I have a huge catalog," she suggests. "I hope to get a booking agent who cares because, believe it or not, I mostly book myself. I'd like to have more songs in cool TV shows and films. Still, I want to keep the focus on the art, so I can keep doing what I love and still pay the bills."

ameliawhite.com

Lee Zimmerman



GARY DANN PHILADELPHIA

The City of Brotherly Love's Kevin Bacon

If you're a member of Philadelphia's improvisational music scene, then you're likely no more than three steps removed from **Gary Dann**. The drummer, studio owner and multimedia producer grew up in The City of Brotherly Love's suburbs and launched his career recording and mixing a variety of Philly-based artists. That's how Dann met Doodlebug, of the Grammy award-winning Digable Planets, who he ended up touring the world with for several years. From there, in 2010, he began to develop The Boom Room, an audiovisual recording studio, rehearsal spot and event space in Fishtown. In the early days of The Boom Room, Dann organized what came to be known as Music Church, an informal weekly gathering of local artists—or non-Philly-based players passing town through while on tour—who simply wanted to hang out and jam. This often led to songwriting sessions and collaborative performances, and while he didn't realize it at the time, it put him and Ben Arsenal in the perfect position to build a band around Arsenal's already successful DJ project. Worldtown SoundSystem would go on to find great success and occupy much of Dann's creative energy for the next 10 years. Just before opening The Boom Room, Dann also began to put together what ultimately became his debut album, *The Wildfire*. He spent four years intensely working on the record, then shelved it when The Boom Room and Worldtown took off. "Most of my musical focus has been with The Boom Room for the last 15 years, and Worldtown for the last 10," Dann says. "But finishing this album has been on my existential 'to do' list for years." At the end of last year, Dann found himself with a relatively quiet December, which he used to rerecord some parts and mix and master the set, which was finally released on May 14, his 44th birthday. In addition to playing shows to promote the project, he's also currently focused on Mahina Cafe, the coffee shop and community space he's opening near The Boom Room, where he'll serve Papa's Spicy Seltzer, a beverage of his own creation. And, these days, he's more excited than ever about his musical community. "If you watch *SNL*, *Fallon* or any of the late-night shows, you'll see Philly musicians backing some of the biggest artists in the world," Dann says. "We're where people look when they need a badass artist to accompany them on a world tour."

boomroomstudios.com/thewildfire Matt Hoffman

