

ARTIST-PROVIDED BIOS

FESTIVAL HEADLINERS:

The Motet – Friday Aug. 10 at 8:30 p.m. on Mountain Avenue Stage

Music and escapism go hand-in-hand, and a concert or an album can unlock another world, if you let it. The Motet respect and revere this time-honored phenomenon. Fusing fiery funk, simmering soul and improvisational inventiveness, the Denver, CO seven-piece—Lyle Divinsky [vocals], Dave Watts [drums], Joey Porter [keyboards], Garrett Sayers [bass], Ryan Jalbert [guitar], Parris Fleming [trumpet] and Drew Sayers [saxophone]—have continually provided an escape for listeners over the course of seven full-length albums since 1998, including their latest release, "Totem." That extends to countless sold-out shows and festivals everywhere from Bonnaroo, Electric Forest, and Summer Camp to All Good Music Festival and High Sierra Music Festival as well as 16 consecutive years of themed Halloween concerts.

After quietly building a diehard and devoted following, 2016 represented a watershed year for the musicians. They welcomed Lyle and Drew into the fold and released Totem, which drew acclaim from Relix, AXS, 303 Magazine and many others. For the first time, The Motet sold out the legendary Red Rocks Amphitheater—the holy grail venue of their hometown—cataloged on "Live at Red Rocks." Sell-outs followed everywhere from The Fillmore (San Francisco) and Tipitina's (New Orleans) to Brooklyn Bowl (Brooklyn), Park West (Chicago) and Crystal Ballroom (Portland). The group locked into an unbreakable groove.

Following Jam Cruise and a second Red Rocks gig, the band fired up the new single "Supernova." Strutting between hypnotic horns and swaggering guitars, the track sees The Motet blast off to another galaxy. Quickly racking up over 150k Spotify streams in a month's time, it instantly excited fans. "Supernova" kicks off a series of upcoming singles that leads back to a third Red Rocks gig set for summer 2018. However, everything comes back to the escape that The Motet deliver.

Blondie – Saturday Aug. 11 at 8:30 p.m. on Mountain Avenue Stage

For the last four decades, Blondie has become and still remains a true national treasure; one whose influence both shaped and continues to inform the worlds of music, fashion and art. From an irreverent Lower East Side punk outfit to bona fide international ambassadors of New York cool, Blondie will forever be synonymous with that punk spirit that lives somewhere in all of us. Comprised of singer-songwriter Debbie Harry, guitarist and co-writer Chris Stein, powerhouse drummer Clem Burke, and long-time band members bassist Leigh Foxx, guitarist Tommy Kessler and keyboardist Matt Katz-Bohen, Blondie's chart-topping success, fearless spirit and rare longevity led to an induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2006, a NME Godlike Genius Award in 2014, a Q Award for Outstanding Contribution to Music in 2016, the 2017 Silver Clef Outstanding Achievement Award and more than 45 million albums sold worldwide to date. Debbie Harry's persona and the band's boundary-pushing pop have shaped the look and sound of many chart-topping female artists who followed in the last three decades.

Blondie's newest album, "Pollinator," delves even deeper into this idea: inspiration from Blondie's action-packed, cross-pollinating past shaping the sound of our collective future. Selected as one of Rolling Stone Magazine's 20 Best Pop Albums of 2017, "Pollinator" is a remarkable album that stands alongside any in their celebrated and trailblazing career. GRAMMY Award-winning producer John Congleton (The Decemberists, St. Vincent, Sigur Ros) brought out the late '70s Parallel Lines attitude of Blondie again on "Pollinator," with arrangements that are fast and fun, lyrics that are romantic and teasing, and synth-stoked hooks that evoke the new wave era.

The Decemberists – Sunday Aug. 12 at 5:30 p.m. on Mountain Avenue Stage

With their eighth full-length studio album, "I'll Be Your Girl," the Decemberists—lead vocalist and guitarist Colin Meloy, guitarist Chris Funk, keyboardist Jenny Conlee, bassist Nate Query, and drummer John Moen—along with producer John Congleton (St. Vincent, Lana del Ray) explore new approaches to making music and broaden their sonic range. It's the Portland, Oregon-based group's first album since 2015's "What a Terrible World, What a Beautiful World" (which charted in the Top Ten and included the #1 AAA single "Make You Better"), though in the time since, they released the EP "Florasongs;" a tenth-anniversary limited edition vinyl box set of their 2006 Capitol Records debut "The Crane Wife;" their own crowd-funded board game Illimat; "The Queen of Hearts," a GRAMMY-nominated collaboration with Olivia Chaney under the name Offa Rex; and "Ben Franklin's Song," the first of Lin-Manuel Miranda's monthly "Hamildrops" of bonus material from "Hamilton;" as well as launching Travelers' Rest, a two-day musical festival of their own curation in Missoula, Montana.

As busy as they have been, the band felt a need to shake things up. "On the last record," says Meloy, "there were moments when I thought I was making familiar choices. I tried to be mindful in the songwriting process of challenging myself and being a little more critical. The idea was, how can we make unfamiliar choices, turn off the light a little and grope around in the dark a bit?" The band took some of the new material on the road and worked out initial arrangements, but didn't want to lock into ideas too quickly. Meloy points to the song "We All Die Young" as an early example of how the songs on "I'll Be Your Girl" transformed through the process. "It was initially a Leonard Cohen rave-up, like his song 'Passing Through,' but on stage it was turning into a more bluesy rumble," he says. "Then when we got in the studio, John was like, 'what if it were more like a Jock Rock song?' And that immediately made sense—but we had to be open enough to hear that."

This radical reworking set a new course for the project. "All of a sudden, we were talking about music and our references," says Meloy. "It kept coming back to Roxy Music and early glam, and we dove in with that in mind. "The Decemberists are a record-collectors' band, we're all fans and scholars of music, so there a lot of touch points that we all get, but they don't always come through. So we were trying to embrace that Bryan Ferry aspect, that kind of set the tone." Previous Decemberists' records like "The Hazards of Love" or "The Crane Wife" have been structured around thematic or musical concepts, though Meloy maintains that ultimately, it's always "our frame of mind that ties them together." This time, he says, the songs share a mood that's steeped in our current times and condition—"exuberant nihilism, an apocalyptic dance party was what we envisioned."

"I'll Be Your Girl" is the sound of a veteran band finding new inspiration, a unit unafraid of challenging itself to reconnect with its creativity. "Making music is an infinite choose-your-own-adventure," says Meloy (who is also, of course, the author of a series of best-selling children's books), "and when you go down one path, the other paths get sealed off. So every time we could, we said, 'If this is what our impulses would tell us to do, let's try to imagine it in a different way.'"

SELECTED BANDS:

Cary Morin – Saturday Aug. 12 at 7:00 p.m. on Mountain Avenue Stage

Described as "one of the best acoustic pickers on the scene today," Cary Morin brings together the great musical traditions of America and beyond like no other. With deft fingerstyle guitar and vocals that alternately convey melodic elation and gritty world-weariness, Morin crafts an inimitable style often characterized as acoustic Native Americana with qualities of blues, bluegrass, jazz, jam, reggae and dance.

Crow tribal member and son of an air force officer, Morin was born in Billings, Montana. He spent the bulk of his youth in Great Falls, where he cut his teeth picking guitar standards at neighborhood get-togethers, before relocating to Northern Colorado. There, his musical career hit

the ground running with The Atoll, a band he founded in 1989 and that toured nationally, gaining a devoted following. Later, he achieved international acclaim with The Pura Fé Trio, for whom the single "Ole Midlife Crisis," which Morin wrote and performed with Pura Fé, placed at number 17 on France's iTunes blues chart. With The Atoll and The Pura Fé Trio, and as a solo artist, Morin has played celebrated venues across the globe, including Paris Jazz Festival, Winter Park Jazz Festival, Folk Alliance International, River People Festival, Shakori Hill Festival, the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and most recently Rochefort En Accords festival in France and The Copenhagen Blues Festival.

Morin's stage credits also include "Tribe" at the Celebrity Theater in Phoenix, and co-authorship of "Turtle Island," a 50-member production that played two consecutive years to sold-out audiences in Northern Colorado. With the Red Willow Dancers, he was a guest of the internationally renowned Kodo Drummers, performing at their 1998 Spring Festival and additional dates in Japan. He has produced or performed on over 15 recordings, and has toured across the US, as well as Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, and the UK. Morin's performances have reached millions on national TV in Japan, France and the UK, as well as on national radio in the US (NPR's Beale Street Caravan), UK (BBC's Whose London), France (RFI), Switzerland and Belgium.

For two consecutive years (2013 and 2014), Cary won the Colorado Blues Challenge Solo Championship. He was also nominated for Aboriginal Entertainer of the Year and Best Blues CD in the Aboriginal People's Choice Music Awards. In 2013, he received a lifetime achievement award from the Fort Collins Music Association (FoCoMA) and won the Colorado Fan Favorite Poll in the blues category for his second solo release, Streamline. His latest album, "Cradle To The Grave," won both an Independent Music Award and an Indigenous Music Award.

In addition to his solo pursuits, Cary Morin performs with Young Ancients, a collaboration with John Magnie and Steve Amedée of The Subdudes.

Ivory Circle – Saturday Aug. 12 at 7:50 p.m. on Linden Street Stage

Ivory Circle is an indie-alternative band from Denver, Colorado, started by singer-songwriter Connie Hong and producer/multi-instrumentalist Chris Beeble. They are joined by Rob Spradling on drums/percussion.

A former middle school choir teacher in a suburb of Aurora, Colorado, Hong used to write songs during her lunch breaks and play them for her students. She would eventually realize her passion was in creating and performing and left the public teaching field behind. Beeble, a longtime friend, joined the project after several songwriting and recording sessions and a mutually found musical vision.

With formal musical training in multiple genres under both of their belts, Hong and Beeble released the acoustic EP "Entropy" in 2013 to positive reviews, leading to a featured song on a promotional spot for Showtime's The Affair, a featured song on VH1's Couples Therapy, a spot in The Denver Post's Underground Music Showcase, as well as opening slots for acclaimed national acts such as Copeland, San Fermin, Son Lux and Caroline Smith. Most recently, Ivory Circle made KTCL's Hometown For The Holidays top-11 in 2014 for their song "Faces and Colors."

Hong's ability to translate personal experiences (like heartache, death or exploration of faith) into relatable musical stories is accomplished with the help of Beeble in their full band arrangements. Spradling brings a unique technological element to Ivory Circle as a videographer and additional in-studio producer, and has designed and developed the light show programs for Ivory Circle's live performances. Recognizing the relevance of maintaining a strong online and social media presence, Ivory Circle creates an intimate experience with their listeners around the world through their blog and social media outlets.

Ivory Circle creates a sound as unique as it is precise, electrifying and passionate, complete with lush strings, harmonic layers and pulsing drumbeats, interwoven between the piano and vocal lines that give them their trademark sound. The combination of their intricate compositions juxtaposed with Hong's vocal prowess make them comparable to notable musicians such as Florence+the Machine, Regina Spektor and Kimbra. The first two EPs in their Triangle series, "Equilateral" and "Isosceles," are available on iTunes and Bandcamp. The third and final installment, "Scalene," was released March of 2018.

Blake Brown & The American Dust Choir – Sunday Aug. 13 at 3:55 p.m. on Mountain Avenue Stage

Blake Brown is an American singer-songwriter from Denver, Colorado. After participating in many collaborative projects, he started Blake Brown & The American Dust Choir in 2013. The idea was to have the flexibility of playing solo, but to also include a revolving cast of musician friends when they were able to join him. Part of the cast includes close friends and musicians of groups The Fray, The Films and Tennis. After 3 EPs, countless shows and a debut full-length album released in March 2018, Brown has found mainstay players. His wife, Tiffany Brown and longtime friends Jason Legler, Adam Blake and Trent Nelson make up The American Dust Choir, creating a blend of indie-rock and Americana. Brown's music is rooted in acoustic sounds, and characterized by his seemingly simple, yet complex melodies and heartfelt lyrics. Marked by a strangely captivating subtleness, Brown's music and haunting stage presence leaves bystanders with something to think about and wanting more.

Katie Herzig – Sunday Aug. 13 at 6:00 p.m. on Library Park Stage

To put Katie Herzig in any sort of box is for it to be broken, as she continues to outdo herself with each new release. Her music is as intimate as it is epic. Herzig grew up in Fort Collins, Colorado but found her way to Nashville upon starting her solo career. Having released her last album "Walk Though Walls" in Spring 2014, this year in 2018 Herzig has come back with her 6th studio album titled "Moment of Bliss." She's performed at Bonnaroo, on VH1, toured extensively both as a headliner and as support for artists such as Brandi Carlile, Sara Bareilles, Ingrid Michaelson, The Fray, and as a member of 10 out of Tenn. She has had her music licensed for many film, TV and commercial uses including over 10 songs on Grey's Anatomy. Herzig collaborated with RAC on their song "We Belong," and has co-produced songs on Ingrid Michaelson's 2014 album "Lights Out," including her platinum selling single "Girls Chase Boys," and went on to produce and write with Ingrid for her last album, "It Doesn't Have To Make Sense," including her single, "Hell No." ASCAP awarded Katie the Sammy Cahn Award for her song "Closest I Get." Earlier this year Katie was nominated for an Emmy for her song "Morse Code" written for Netflix's The Mr. Peabody and Sherman Show.