

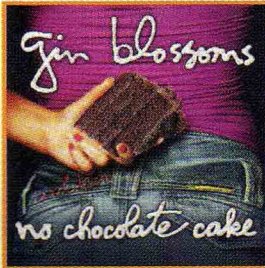
Billboard

ALBUMS

loose on such classics as "A Change Is Gonna Come." Reuniting with "Soul" producer David Foster, Seal delivers a more engaging and satisfying addition to his repertoire with "Seal 6: Commitment." The title says it all as Seal mines the various forms of commitment—to love, family and self—on original songs that are both melodic and eloquent. Opener "If I'm Any Closer" is an uplifting, Sting-reminiscent anthem that brings the album to life, as does the soaring "Nighttime" and "Mistake." **Billboard**

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one of this year's weirder
Adz" is introspective, offbeat
tronics. The song "I Washed
hushed songwriting with c
ing vocals, while "Vesuvius
and brass notes around a s
Stevens sounds most com
thetic when his fragile vo
unruly instrumentation, as
opener "Futile Devices"
Communication." "The Ag
parison to Stevens' past ac
considered on its own t
intriguing take on electro-



GIN BLOSSOMS No Chocolate Cake

Producers: various
429 Records/SLG

Release Date: Sept. 28

The Gin Blossoms continue to concoct

melodic hooks framed by a mix of jangly alternative pop-rock on the band's newest album, "No Chocolate Cake." While its 1992 breakthrough, "New Miserable Experience," was powered by the pen of co-founder Doug Hopkins, who died the following year, the Gin Blossoms have since primarily showcased the songwriting of members Robin Wilson and Jesse Valenzuela, revealing an uncommon depth to the group's talents. The new uptempo track "Miss Disarray," which is bubbling under Billboard's Adult Top 40 chart and features writing and production assistance from Danny Wilde (the Rembrandts), ushers in the band's second album since 1996. The group needles its past on "Dead or Alive on the 405," where Wilson sings of jamming with an unnamed fellow act once ubiquitous at radio. ("You play your hit from '89, I'll play mine from '95.") And the band summarizes its perseverance on the set's buoyant closer, "Goin' to California," where Wilson offers, "I've got to warn ya that I may never leave again." The Gin Blossoms' loyal fan base undoubtedly hopes the sentiment translates to a promise kept.—GT



steer on "Cyanide" of the
rockabilly swagger of
"Won't Somebody," where
Graffin pleads for a "god-
damn fix of this toxic
change in weather." None
of the new spice here is
likely to change anyone's
mind about who Bad Reli-
gion is or what the band
does. But you have to ad-



Release Date: Sept. 20

It's no coincidence that "Hal-
Digest," the fourth album from Atlanta indie
act Deerhunter, was partly produced by Ben A
who also had a hand in Animal Collective's
album, "Merriweather Post Pavilion." On its
two efforts, Deerhunter has followed Ar
Collective's lead in transitioning from a roo
indie obscurity into a hook-filled songwr
force. Following 2008's enjoyable "Microca
"Halcvon Digest" is both Deerhunter's