

# the JESUS LIZARD

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In the jade-cultivating climes of online rock journalism, the angle of “band has new album,” is about as interesting as watching Instagram reels of your brother-in-law’s recent bathroom remodel. But when a band decides to follow up their last album from over 26 years ago? That’s high on testicular fortitude and as dumb as fidget spinners. Yet, when that band is the Jesus Lizard, everything in your pathetic cultural dystopia suddenly falls away and the air smells like Heaven... Their seventh studio album, *Rack*, produced by Paul Allen, and slated for release on September 13 via Ipecac Recordings, features 11 tracks of brisk guitar rock you haven’t heard since... the last time the Jesus Lizard took over a stage in your town. The Jesus Lizard — vocalist David Yow, guitarist Duane Denison, bassist David Wm. Sims, and drummer Mac McNeilly — have returned with a record teeming with the kind of madness needed to beat down today’s AOR mediocrity and piss-perfect pop drivél alike.

Since their inception in Chicago in 1987, the Jesus Lizard has thrilled audiences all over the planet. The impeccable rocket-thrust rhythm section of Sims and McNeilly was the perfect launchpad for Denison’s jagged yet clean-toned riffing and Yow’s mercurial vocalizations manifesting as everything from panicked citizen, reality escapee or wounded sea mammal. The Jesus Lizard’s fury carried on through six studio albums, two live recordings and a brace of singles and EPs.

On *Rack*, the Jesus Lizard have returned reconstituted, refreshed and positively revving. No tepid, bland tracks to show how they’ve “matured” as songwriters. No inane detours into unnecessary genre exercises. And definitely no weird moves into experimental realms that come off just as contrived and calculated as the top of the *Billboard* Charts. The opening salvo “Hide & Seek” finds Yow singing/*sprechstimming* his way with remarkable clarity as his bandmates shore him up with their patented acceleration. The noir vibes coming off of “What If?” is a startling direction for the band, with Yow narrating the action, like he was looking at a random person in an airport lounge and concocting an elaborate backstory about them. The sinister “Alexis Feels Sick” is inspired by Girls Against Boys/Soulside drummer Alexis Fleisig’s guarded opinion of modern life that turns into a treatise of man’s inhumanity to man. “Moto(R)” is playing out of the coolest car tailgating in the parking lot at one of those horrific radio-rock fests. And while we’re on the subject of forcing cool into uncool, “Falling Down”

reminds all of us in slightly under three-and-a-half minutes how marvelously badass the Jesus Lizard have always been, making our fists ball-up so tightly they look like the ends of chicken bones.

The Jesus Lizard. They might not be young, but they will never, *ever* get fucking *old*.

