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—*San Francisco Chronicle*

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RIOT ACT MEDIA

GABRIEL KAHANE
MAGNIFICENT BIRD



Gabriel Kahane's new album *Magnificent Bird* is out now on Nonesuch Records.

The 'luminous' new album features collaborations with Andrew Bird, Chris Thile, Caroline Shaw & more.

Early Praise for *Magnificent Bird*

"A gorgeous, intimate collection of ten musical snapshots... Kahane's lyrics sparkle with an incisive blend of sentiment and clarity, and he matches them with music that pushes more restlessly than ever against the constraints of the song form... the artwork that results is glistening and magical."

—San Francisco Chronicle

"A collection of sweet and intimate songs that have the immediacy of a pencil sketch and the depth of a mural."

—No Depression

"Kahane brings tremendous sophistication to his fifth album. Deft, prose poem-like songs: an illuminating humanity is absolutely key. A most eloquent exploration of our current lot."

—Mojo * * * *

Select Praise for Gabriel Kahane

"One of the finest, most searching songwriters of the day."

—New Yorker

"Almost ridiculously deft in finding new pathways between contemporary musical thought, art pop, folk and a new vision of musical theater."

—Los Angeles Times

"Kahane has the rare ability to turn arcane information into winning tunes."

—Pitchfork

For press inquiries, including downloads and interview requests, email
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Gabriel Kahane by Jason Quigley

Download high-res version [here](#).

Composer/singer/songwriter Gabriel Kahane's new album, *Magnificent Bird*, is

out now. The record, his fifth solo LP and second for Nonesuch Records, is his most personal since 2011's *Where are the Arms*. Kahane revels in the tension between his own experiences of grief, nostalgia, shame, and salvation, and the roiling chaos of a nation and planet in crisis. "[Sit Shiva](#)," the album's first single, finds Kahane mourning, online because of pandemic travel restrictions, the death of his maternal grandmother; in typical fashion, he mines not just pathos, but humor and grace amidst his family's grief.

In October 2020, the final month of a year he spent off the internet, Kahane set out to write a song every day. "I wanted to create an aural brain scan at the end of this experiment," he explains, "and to give myself permission to write about small things, rather than trying to distill the enormity of the moment into grand statements."

In "Chemex," a cathedral built out of synthesizers and a one-man choir, he announces his theme: the marriage of the mundane to the increasingly quotidian terror that accompanies life in a wounded country, and, moreover, on a planet in the throes of catastrophic climate change. As songs like "We are the Saints" and "Hot Pink Raingear" demonstrate, *Magnificent Bird* is suffused with impressions of the physical world. But the narrative is just as often internal, a landscape of the mind. Here is Kahane analyzing apocalyptic dreams ("Die Traumdeutung"), now confronting professional jealousy ("Magnificent Bird"), and there, interrogating—and yet indulging!—nostalgia (the elegiac anthem "[To Be American](#)," with an all-star backing band featuring Andrew Bird, Caroline Shaw, Chris Thile, Punch Brothers bassist Paul Kowert, and percussionist Ted Poor). And in "Linda and Stuart," sung in close harmony with Amelia Meath (of Sylvan Esso and label mates Mountain Man), a portrait of an elderly couple in housebound isolation reveals itself to be the narrator's anguished, retroactive farewell to New York.

"My internet hiatus grew out of a belief that at root, our digital devices reinforce the fiction that convenience and efficiency have intrinsic value. That has implications with respect to climate crisis, to inequality, to our (in)ability to see ourselves in each other, to build the kinds of coalitions necessary to make a more just world. I wanted to leave it all behind not as a further expression of techno-pessimism, but rather in search of a positive alternative.

"In that sense, this record relates to *Book of Travelers*," he muses, referring to his 2018 Nonesuch debut. Hailed as "a stunning portrait of a singular moment in America" by *Rolling Stone*, the album chronicled an 8,980-mile, off-the-grid

railway journey in the aftermath of the 2016 presidential election. “I wanted unmediated interaction with strangers, so I took that trip without my phone. Somewhere in New Mexico, I remember thinking, ‘Wow, this is really transformative. I should do this for more than thirteen days.’

The dozen collaborators who appear on *Magnificent Bird*—a list that also includes composer/performers Nathalie Joachim and Pekka Kuusisto; the celebrated clarinetist Anthony McGill; avant-folk stalwarts Sam Amidon and Holcombe Waller; longtime colleagues Gabriel Cabezas, Casey Foubert, Alex Sopp, and Elizabeth Ziman; and mix engineer Joseph Lorge—reflect a central paradox: a trunk of songs written in self-imposed isolation was brought to life through the very technology Kahane had shunned. “Everyone who plays on the album is someone I love as a person as much as I do as a musician. The truth is, after all that isolation, I just wanted an excuse to get in touch with my friends. It was almost secondary to get them to play on this record, which is, as much as any I’ve made, an expression of community.”

Gabriel Kahane lives in Portland, Oregon, where he serves as Creative Chair for the Oregon Symphony, for whom he composed, in 2018, *emergency shelter intake form*, an exploration of inequality through the lens of housing issues. This season, his piano concerto, *Heirloom*, was premiered by his father, Jeffrey Kahane, with the Kansas City Symphony; it received its West Coast premiere in Portland earlier this month. Upcoming projects include an orchestral song cycle—for the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Cincinnati Symphony—further exploring his internet hiatus, surveillance capitalism, and the cascading consequences of our digital regime. The recipient of a 2021 Charles Ives Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Gabriel has collaborated with a wide array of artists ranging from Sufjan Stevens, Phoebe Bridgers, Blake Mills, and Paul Simon, to Brooklyn Rider, yMusic, and John Adams. He is a graduate of Brown University.

Gabriel Kahane on Tour

March 28 City Winery, Boston, MA

March 31 The Falcon, Marlboro, NY

April 4 Ferst Center for the Arts, Atlanta, GA

April 5 City Winery, Philadelphia, PA

April 7 Soundcheck Live @ Greene Space, New York, NY

April 8 Rockwood Music Hall, New York, NY

April 14 Pat Reser Center for the Arts, Beaverton, OR*

May 11 Bing Concert Hall, Palo Alto, CA

May 12 Gold Diggers, Los Angeles, CA

May 13 Swallow Hill, Denver, CO

May 18 Parkway Theatre, Minneapolis, MN

May 21 Constellation, Chicago, IL

May 22 Kerrytown Concert House, Ann Arbor, MI

May 24 City Winery, Nashville, TN

May 26 Natalie's Grandview, Columbus, OH

* with the Oregon Symphony

Additional dates TBA

LINKS:

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[Nonesuch](#)

