

ARTIST: Ty Segall  
 ALBUM: *Sleeper*  
 LABEL: Drag City  
 RELEASE DATE: Aug. 20  
 MANAGEMENT: Michelle Cable  
 PRODUCER: self-produced  
 PUBLISHING: Domino Publishing  
 BOOKING AGENT: Michelle Cable, Panache  
 CHART HISTORY: *Twins* (2012), No. 9 Heatseekers Albums, 14,000; *Slaughterhouse* (2012), No. 8 Heatseekers Albums, 13,000  
 TWITTER: @tysegall



## ROCK

# Punk Takes A Pause

Ultra-prolific rocker Ty Segall goes acoustic, slows rollout for 'Sleeper'

By Reggie Ugwu

Ty Segall isn't slowing down, he just needs a moment. It's been eight months since the 26-year-old California garage rocker last released an album of new material, a mere calendar blip for most artists, but ages for Segall, who has put out more than a dozen LPs and many more EPs and singles since forming his first band in 2006. Last year, in what has become basically indie rock folklore, he released three albums with three different outfits—*Slaughterhouse* by Ty Segall Band, *Hair* by Ty Segall & White Fence and *Twins* by Ty Segall. So the fact that he's stayed quiet for most

of 2013, and that new album *Sleeper*, out Aug. 20 on Drag City, is considerably more mellow and reflective than almost anything in his catalog to date, might suggest to some that Segall has grown weary of punishing punk rock and settled into a more serious and sustainable version of himself. He insists that's not the case.

"The stuff I'm working on now is super loud and aggressive again, so it's weird," Segall says of the recordings he's done since finishing *Sleeper* in March. "But when I was making this album I couldn't have written a loud, heavy song if somebody had paid me to. I tried—it just wasn't working."

Eight months ago, around *Twins*' release, Segall's adoptive father died after a long battle with tongue cancer. Segall and his dad were close—Dad got him hooked on surfing when he was 9—and the impact of his death was compounded by a rift it caused in his immediate family. Though he's reluctant to be specific, Segall says "awful stuff" happened between him and his mother after the death and the two are no longer speaking.

*Sleeper*, a disarmingly assured slab of psychedelic folk, finds Segall confronting loss and loneliness head-on. He recorded and played all the instruments by himself, save for strings provided by friend and frequent collaborator Dillon Watson.

"A lot of those songs are kind of me dealing with a lot of awful things that culminated when my dad passed away," he says. "The whole record's really about that, to be honest. I was very angry, very upset, and I'm glad

I got it out in that way because I don't want to be the kind of guy that deals with things in a self-destructive way. I've done that in the past."

While channeling his inner tempest into song, Segall turned to '60s acoustic folk heroes like Bert Jansch, John Fahey and Donovan. He keyed into the way they boiled everything down to guitar and voice and says he challenged himself to do the same, wanting to leave "nothing to hide behind."

Rian Murphy, who heads Drag City Records, says he embraced Segall's decision to follow his muse into uncharted territory. "We know that Ty's capable of a lot of different things, and for us that's exciting," he says. "We started hearing from him while he was making the record and we were just knocked out by how different a listening experience it was from *Twins*."

To capitalize on the singular nature of *Sleeper* within the Segall oeuvre, Drag City is planning a series of intimate small-venue shows, in-stores and radio sessions around its release, a departure from the mosh-friendly punk spaces Segall has played in the past. The artist has assembled a new, all-acoustic band for the project that will tour the United States in August and September before making a brief stop in Europe.

In another departure, Drag City has opted not to release any singles or videos in advance of the album, forcing audiences to consider the project as a full body of work. "In this day and age, a lot of people don't expect an album. They expect a series of songs," Murphy says. "What we have here is a whole journey that goes from beginning to end, and that's an important distinction to make."

As for whether the new mellow, acoustic Segall will resurface on any of his next dozen records, the artist makes no promises. "I don't really have a plan for that kind of thing, but I do tend to move on to the next idea pretty fast," he says. "I don't like to sit around." ●

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**DJ Manolo, Williamstown, N.J. 2 Faced Funks & Zoe Badwi, "My Way With You."** This one is a creeper, and it will grow on you. Sexy female vocals with a thick bassline and simple yet very effective synth lines that work perfectly with the arrangement.



**Tiësto featuring Kyler England, "Take Me" (Extended Edit).** I commend Tijs for evolving from his mid-'90s sound, but I haven't been a fan of some of his recent material. However, I was happily surprised by this one. Catchy vocal hooks, really nice melodic touches with driving, but not overly done, synth lines.

