

# SEATTLE WEEKLY

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## CD Reviews

BY SEATTLE WEEKLY STAFF

**JIM CARROLL**, *Runaway EP* (Kill Rock Stars) Jim Carroll recently told me that the last song the Velvet Underground recorded before Lou Reed left the band was an early version of Carroll's morbid roll call, "People Who Died," a lengthy group obituary which quickly garnered "punk anthem" status when Carroll finally released his version of it in 1980. To this day, when I mention Jim Carroll to most folks, they consistently reference either this song or (cringe) the poorly executed Carroll biopic starring Leonardo DiCaprio, *The Basketball Diaries*. It's an unfortunate oversight because this underground poet laureate has made his share of memorable rock songs over the years. He gravitates toward simple guitar-bass-drum structures, but that's perfectly acceptable considering his lyrics fall far outside the traditional verse, chorus, verse. Although there's no new material on this just-released five-song EP, it features a pleasing handful of demo and live versions of some of his unsung classics. Carroll revisits his collaborations with Truly frontman Robert Roth (guitar, organ, mellotron, and production) on "Hairshirt Fracture" and "Falling Down Laughing," songs originally recorded for the *Basketball Diaries* soundtrack and inexplicably left off the final version. It also offers up enjoyably rough-hewn renderings of two earlier works: the infectious poseur reprimand, "It's Too Late," and the glam, urban "I Want the Angel," both recorded in 1998 at the Crocodile with the distinctly up-tempo assistance of Kurt Bloch and Brian Young. A charming, organ-infused version of Del Shannon's "Runaway" serves as a fitting title track for this brief yet satisfying collection.--Hannah Levin

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