

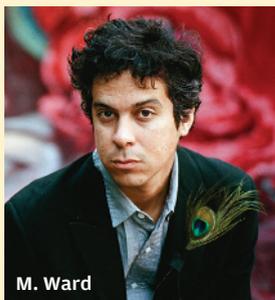
# Smoking Section

BY AUSTIN SCAGGS

Where was Welsh soul phenom **Duffy** when she learned of her three Grammy nominations? "I was at a hotel in Newcastle, England, eating breakfast in the bath," she tells the S.S. "When I got the call, bubbles went everywhere! I want so many Grammys that I can't possibly hold them in two hands!" Duffy's three nods, including one for Best New Artist, are one of the few bright spots in this year's nominations. We're pumped for **Robert Plant** and **Alison Krauss**, who received five nominations for the **T Bone Burnett**-produced *Raising Sand*. And it was cool to see **Jonny Greenwood's** *There Will Be Blood* film score and the **Kings of Leon's** *Only by the Night* getting some love. But what the fuck? **Gwyneth Paltrow** could go home with an award – for reading a children's story – while S.S. favorites like Bob Dylan, Fleet Foxes, Vampire Weekend, the Black Keys, the Roots, Lucinda Williams, Jack Johnson, MGMT, Stephen Malkmus and Nick Cave aren't even nominated.



I loved every minute of it," says folkie **M. Ward**, who had a whirlwind year as the Him in **She and Him**, his awesome folk-rock collaboration with **Zoey Deschanel**. Though he and Zoey have started working on demos for a follow-up, Ward is preparing for the February release of his sixth solo album, *Hold Time*, which features guest spots by **Bright Eyes' Mike Mogis** and **Grandaddy's Jason Lytle**. "I loved the orchestra-



M. Ward

tion on a Billie Holiday album called *Lady in Satin*," says Ward, adding that it inspired him to juxtapose lush arrangements with striking guitar tones and raw vocals. The killer cut is "Oh Lonesome Me" (written by Don Gibson and covered by Neil Young), a haunting duet

with **Lucinda Williams**. "That was a dream come true," says Ward, who adds that the highly anticipated *Monsters of Folk* album – with Mogis, **Jim James** and **Conor Oberst** – will have to wait until 2010. "Yeah, it's a strange life I have, but I can't complain."



Austin has always been a musical hotbed, but two projects due next year will make you wonder if there's something special in the water down there. The **Heartless Bastards** – the brainchild of singer-guitarist **Erika Wennerstrom**, who recently relocated from Dayton, Ohio, to Austin – will drop a dirty-rock masterpiece called *The Mountain* in February. And we were recently turned on by **Black Keys** drummer **Patrick Carney** to the **Strange Boys**. They are four kids from Texas who will blow you away with their Sixties garage-rock-revival debut, due in early '09. Brace yourselves, then go ahead and check out both bands on the S.S. Website ([rollingstone.com/smokingsection](http://rollingstone.com/smokingsection)).



THE NEXT AMY WINEHOUSE? Adele onstage in London in November

## Meet Adele, the U.K.'s Newest Soul Star

Big-voiced singer scores hit record and four Grammy nominations  
By Nicole Frehsée

PEOPLE ALWAYS SAID about me, 'She's not going to get anywhere – she's a fat girl,'" says 20-year-old British soul singer Adele. "But it's obviously not an issue. I'm selling records, aren't I?"

Since its release in June, Adele's debut disc of smoky torch songs and retro-modern R&B, *19*, has sold more than 270,000 copies and spawned a hit single, "Chasing Pavements." The London crooner (full name:

Adele attended the same performing-arts high school as Winehouse, Kate Nash and Leona Lewis – but she was more interested in A&R than singing. "I wanted to help other people sell records," she says. However, three demos that she recorded for a class project and posted on MySpace caught the attention of XL Recordings. "I went in thinking I could get a scouting job – then they said, 'We want to sign you.'"

As she was working on her album, Adele suffered a serendipitous case of heartbreak: She discovered that her boyfriend of six months had cheated on her. "I went to the pub [where he was] and punched him in the face," she says. "I got thrown out, and as I was running away, the phrase 'chasing pavements' came to me. I sang it into my phone, went home and got three chords together." So what became of the ex? "We're still friends," says Adele. "I'm grateful – I got a multiplatinum album [in the U.K.] out of it, and he still works at a phone shop."

### BREAKING

Adele Laurie Blue Adkins has also scored four Grammy nods, including Best New Artist and Record of the Year. "After my publicist told me," she says, "I locked myself in the toilet for a good hour and cried."

As the latest U.K. soul bird to find success in America, Adele is often compared to Amy Winehouse and Duffy. But she's not a partyer like Winehouse, and she doesn't have Duffy's pinup looks. Adele is, however, refreshingly real – she's got a working-class London accent, a heavy Marlboro habit and a relaxed attitude about her un-pop-star body. "Whenever I've got a boyfriend, he likes it," she quips.

She performed "Chasing Pavements" on *Saturday Night Live* in October for a record audience of 15 million people – thanks to Sarah Palin's surprise cameo. "I met her, and she said, 'I'm a huge fan,'" recalls Adele. "I had an Obama badge on. I felt like a backstabber."