

Entertainment WEEKLY

July 31, 2015

Lianne La Havas



TITLE

Blood

LABEL

Nonesuch

GENRE

Pop

REVIEW BY

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▶ **WHAT HAPPENS TO A** singer whose debut was widely beloved and earned a ringing endorsement from Prince yet never became a top 10 hit? If you're Lianne La Havas, a British folk-soul singer, you hightail it to Jamaica with your mom and get to work on making an even better album.

When the 25-year-old released her first album, *Is Your Love Big Enough?*, in 2012, after singing backup for Paloma Faith, La Havas joined a new breed of soul divas and earned no shortage of comparisons to Adele and Erykah Badu. But on her latest album, she separates herself from the pack. The 10-track set draws on her Jamaican and Greek ancestry by combining easygoing beach vibes with lyrical allusions to mythology. It also showcases her impressive vocal strength. Take "Unstoppable," the album's first single, produced and co-written by Paul Epworth, who worked on Adele's smash *21*. Over dreamy piano chords and harps that give way to a sexy funk groove, La Havas sings about clinging to an otherworldly love. "What You Don't Do" is even better, with her crooning about her beloved over swaggering horns.

Most of the album mines a similar sonic terrain, but La Havas excels when she takes bigger risks. On "Never Get Enough," she mixes in vocal distortion and electric guitars to give her sound a surprisingly psychedelic edge. "Turn up for love," she howls on "Grow." "Turn up and watch us sing!" And when she does, you'll oblige. **B+**

