

March 2026

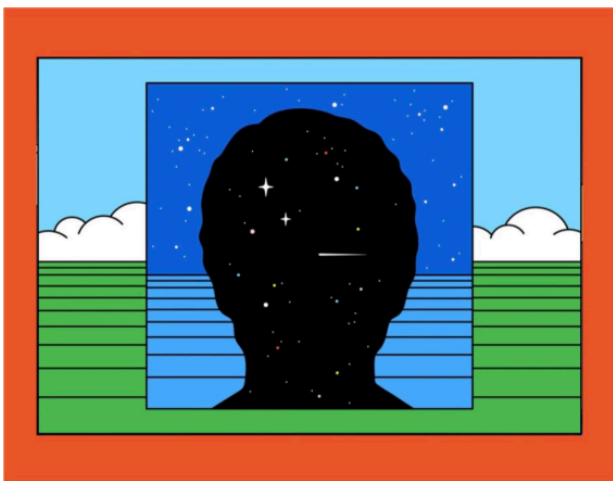


Image: Alice Fillice

"Music blends with the heartbeat universe and we forget the brain beat."

— Jack Kerouac

Koko's Bavarian was built on the belief that the best nights aren't contrived or overthought. Long wooden tables. Shared pours. Ketchup and Mustard. A room designed for forward momentum, where the evening has its own gravity and the music is its engine. Call it The Communal Pulse: Austin's rock-and-roll backbone wired into the traditional simplicity of a European biergarten.

Every music selection this month was chosen to move the atmosphere, both physically and emotionally. Songs that you tap your foot to without notice, hum-along melodies, grooves you know by heart.

"Feel Good Inc." by Gorillaz opens with one of the great basslines in modern music—a low, locked-in undercurrent that feels both rubbery and relentless. Damon Albarn delivers the verses in a dry, slightly behind-the-beat cadence, cool and restrained, before De La Soul injects sharp, playful verses that snap the song into full hip-hop mode. Then the chorus lifts—airy, melodic, almost weightless—creating a contrast to the subterranean pulse below. It's layered but never cluttered, tight but loose at the same time. The fun is in that balance: precision in the rhythm section, freedom in the delivery, and a groove strong enough that it never has to try too hard.

"Odyssey" by Beck and Phoenix moves with a different kind of propulsion—less subterranean, more horizon-line. The rhythm section is crisp and driving, with a clean, motorik pulse that feels steady without being rigid. Phoenix's Thomas Mars delivers the verses with that smooth, slightly urgent glide, while Beck slips in with a relaxed cool that offsets the forward motion. The guitars are bright and tightly wound, synths shimmering just beneath the surface, creating a glossy but breathable texture. It's polished but not overworked, rhythmic without feeling mechanical. The energy comes from momentum and interplay—two distinct voices riding the same groove—giving the song a buoyant, optimistic feel that's tight in structure but loose in spirit.

Leo Sayer's "You Make Me Feel Like Dancing" is, on paper, an unlikely addition to any playlist that takes itself seriously. That's exactly why it's here. The falsetto is unguarded, the disco groove is airtight, and the whole thing moves with the kind of cheerful momentum that makes self-consciousness feel like a waste of time. The horn stabs punctuate the chorus like exclamation points; the bass keeps everything grounded while the arrangement bounces around it. At a certain point in the evening at **Koko's**, the room doesn't need curation—it needs permission. It works because it doesn't try to be anything other than what it is: a three-minute argument for participation.

"Hungry Heart" by Bruce Springsteen is one of the great American sing-alongs, and its power is in its build. Roy Bittan's bright, percussive piano opens the track, then Max Weinberg's steady backbeat and Garry Tallent's melodic bass settle into a clean, driving groove. The chord progression feels familiar from the first pass, and Springsteen's unguarded delivery keeps it human and loose. By the time the "whoa-oh-oh" refrain hits, the room is already singing before it realizes it made the choice.

Kerouac was onto something. The brain beat—the noise of the day, the weight of the week—doesn't stand a chance against the right bassline in the right room.

Keep the pulse steady. The rest takes care of itself.