

# Bringing It Home Music

BY EMILY DRABANSKI

## INDIE ROCK

### THE RIP TIDE

BEIRUT

[www.beirutband.com](http://www.beirutband.com)

When Zach Condon was a Santa Fe teen, he was playing jazz trumpet and writing songs. The high school dropout got a GED and studied on his own terms, taking classes at area colleges and the University of New Mexico with a break couch-surfing through Europe.

The multi-instrumentalist and singer recorded most of his debut (2006) album, *Gulag Orkestar*, in his bedroom. To form a proper band, he recruited College of Santa Fe (now Santa Fe University of Art and Design) students Paul Collins (bass) and Taoseño Nick Petree (drums), as well as an Albuquerque friend Perrin Cloutier (accordion).

Beirut moved to New York City in 2006, added musicians, and quickly created a buzz with its exuberant, high-energy performances.

Under Condon's direction, Beirut's no-holds-barred, brassy Eastern European gypsy sound vaulted it into the indie-rock world sans guitars. Beirut followed up with *The Flying Club Cup* CD in 2007, featuring songs with a decidedly French influence. Beirut released five EPs, and the band rapidly began headlining major shows.

Now 25, Condon is leading Beirut on a more inward musical journey with *The Rip Tide* on his own label, Pompeii Records. The melodies, while still peppered with the exotic sounds of accordions, brass, and Zach's signature trumpet riffs and ukulele strums, have a leaner pop feel.

Condon's romantic purity of voice (akin to Rufus Wainwright's) and musicality have grown through the years, as evidenced in Beirut's most mainstream CD to date. The upbeat melodies are intertwined with the poetic thread of aching loneliness

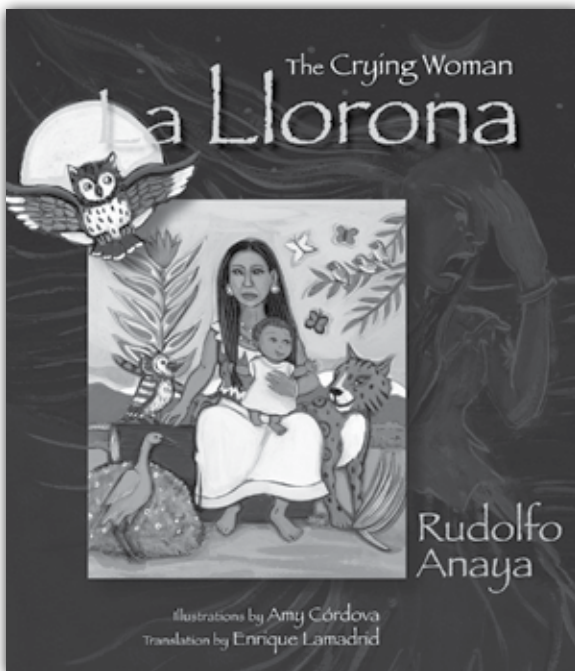


KRISTIANNA SMITH

and wistful reflection that lies at the heart of Condon's lyrics.

With revelry and a mix of electronica, drums and brass, "Santa Fe" reflects the push/pull Condon feels about his hometown. He sings, "Whatever comes through your door, you see her face to face/ Sign me up Santa Fe and call your son. ... On the cross Santa Fe, and no I won't/ Sign me up Santa Fe." ❖

For info: [www.beirutband.com](http://www.beirutband.com). To hear, "Santa Fe," visit [www.nmmagazine.com](http://www.nmmagazine.com).



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