

**CLAP YOUR HANDS SAY YEAH
THE TOURIST**
CYHSY INC.

Clap Your Hands Say Yeah's 2005 self-released debut received widespread critical acclaim and was named one of "The 50 Most Important Recordings Of The Decade" by NPR. In the ensuing years, Alec Ounsworth has continued pushing himself creatively, releasing three additional full-lengths and issuing two solo projects. Like previous **CYHSY** records, **The Tourist** nods to Ounsworth's musical heroes—a group that includes artists such as John Cale, Robert Wyatt, Tom Waits and Nick Cave. However, **The Tourist** also shows a natural progression from previous records: "Better Off" and "The Vanity Of Trying" are lush, keyboard-augmented songs, while "A Chance To Cure" and "Ambulance Chaser" are rhythmically askew, and the sighing "Loose Ends" is delicate, acoustic-based folk-rock, while "Fireproof" inexplicably blends Radiohead, Television, and The Cure. No matter what the style, however, **The Tourist's** arrangements are laser-sharp and deliberate. Though **CYHSY** is ostensibly a solo project, adding a rhythm section to **The Tourist** gives the songs added momentum. Throw in a mix by legendary producer Dove Fridmann (The Flaming Lips) and you have **CYHSY's** best showing since its debut.



**HANNI EL KHATIB
SAVAGE TIMES**
INNOVATIVE LEISURE

Hanni El Khatib's first idea for his **Savage Times** project was to do something he'd never done before. Instead, he ended up doing ... well, everything he'd never done before. If he felt like making a solo electric guitar song, he'd do it—like the one-take-from-the-heart "Miracle." If he wanted to compose on piano for the first time ever, he would, and that's how he ended up with the shimmering soul-searching "Gun Clap Hero." And if he wanted to resurrect old-school studio pro techniques like charting music for a string section or hiring a trio of singers for backup vocals, he'd do that, too. **Savage Times** was recorded Crystal Antlers frontman-turned-producer Jonny Bell's Jazzcats studio. Each day, **Hanni** would take the hour-long drive through L.A.'s industrial corridor to Long Beach, sketching out riffs and lyrics as he drove. (The Suicide-meets-Italo-disco burner "Born Brown" came suddenly while in traffic, and he started screaming the words as loud as he could so his voice would be the perfect amount of wrecked). Seven months and fifty songs, **Savage Times** was complete. The result? 21 best-of-the-sessions songs, destined for vinyl release as a 10" box set, as well as the kind of creative revelations that only happen when you quit looking around and start looking ahead.



**GRANDDADDY
LAST PLACE**
30TH CENTURY/COLUMBIA

After **Granddaddy** broke up in 2006, Jason Lytle relocated to Montana, where he happily made two solo albums, and reconnected with the natural world around him. Eventually, though, life uprooted him again, taking him to Portland, Oregon until he eventually returned to his former home of Modesto, California. The return to California was practical (he needed to be near his bandmates) but also appropriate: He had started writing songs that he felt would be fitting for another **Granddaddy** album. The result, **Last Place**, is a perfect addition to the band's celebrated, critically-acclaimed catalogue that includes their breakthrough sophomore album, **Software Slump**, and their debut, **Under the Western Freeway**. It's a symphonic swirl of lo-fi sonics and mile-high harmonies, found sounds and electronics-gone-awry mingling with perfect, power pop guitar tones. Lytle's voice sounds as warm and intimate as ever, giving graceful levity to the doomsday narratives that have dominated the **Granddaddy** output — especially on the charming first single "Evermore" and piano-driven "A Lost Machine," which features a melancholic and awry atmosphere that sounds quintessentially **Granddaddy**. Despite a decade-long absence, **Last Place** finds the band's power diminished. Get excited!



**CRYSTAL FAIRY
CRYSTAL FAIRY**
IPECAC

Crystal Fairy is what you might call a "super group." Consisting of **Melvins** vocalist/guitarist **Buzz "King Buzzo" Osborne** & drummer **Dale Crover** along with **Le Butcherettes** vocalist/guitarist **Teri Gender Bender** and multi-instrumentalist **Omar Rodriguez-Lopez (At The Drive-In, ex-The Mars Volta, etc.)**, **Crystal Fairy** would probably prefer to be known as a "mutual admiration society" ... Or just a band — but one that plays the finest psychedelic glam sludge you've ever heard — which is saying a lot coming from this crew. Even more remarkable than the talent involved was how quickly **Crystal Fairy's** debut came about. The **Melvins** and **Le Butcherettes** had been touring buddies for a while, so collaborating came easy. The **Melvins** asked Teri what she had always wanted to try and then they jumped right in. "We did three songs the first day, wrote and recorded, as they are on the record, "Drugs on the Bus," "Necklace of Divorce" and "Bent Teeth." And then Omar put his bass on 'em. It's extraordinary [laughs]. ... Me and Dale are smart guys when it comes to knowing when things are done." Teri came up with words and melodies as quick as the **Melvins** could spit out songs — and the result is an album that has a special urgency and primal hunger while recalling the best qualities of everyone's main gig. It's heavy, sensual, and a little scary. The way good rock and roll should be.



**DISPERSE
FOREWORD**
SEASON OF MIST

Few young bands display such extreme technical prowess as **Disperse**. Yet talent and advanced mastery of instruments has never been the main factor in what sets a band apart from the mass of musicians trying to break through. The road to success has rather been paved with great song-writing and this is exactly what the now Polish and English quartet is delivering on its third full-length **Foreword**. **Disperse** manage to make complexity appear easy and add an incredible lightness to cascading syncopated breaks, odd-time signatures and all the tools of the trade that are considered as essentials for progressive music. **Foreword** is the logical step further from **Disperser's** last album, **Living Mirrors**, which witnessed the hopefuls injecting fresh momentum into the progressive genre. Elements of such giants such as Pink Floyd, Dream Theater, And Cynic were playfully incorporated, whirled around, and fused with other ingredients ranging from Metal to Jazz into a new exciting sound. With **Foreword**, **Disperse** invite you to set sails on a luxurious musical passage that lets you drift over an ocean of sparking details and ever new wonders waiting at the beckoning horizon.



**IBIBIO SOUND SYSTEM
UYAI**
MERGE

Fronted by London-born Nigerian singer Eno Williams, **Ibibio Sound Machine** is a clash of African and electronic elements inspired in equal measure by the golden era of West African funk, disco, modern post-punk, and electro. The titles of the band's new album, **Uyai**, means "beauty" in Ibibio language and refers to the strength and free spirit of women in general and, in particular, the courage of the women in Eno's family, to whom she often refers in her writing. The songs of **Uyai** tackle the stories of life—both large and small. The album opens with "Give Me a Reason," a song about the 276 Chibok girls who were abducted in northern Nigeria in 2014 and remain missing to this day. Eno challenges, "Why should girls be denied the right to education, and why should people in general not be free to be who they want to be in their life?" On the lighter side, "The Pot Is On Fire" is a food dance celebrating the "happy place" when the food will be ready soon. Weird and wonderful folk stories, recounted to Eno by her family as a child in her mother's Ibibio tongue, form the creative fabric from which the **Uyai's** unique musical tapestry is woven. Throw these evocative images with the group's future funk and you've got one of 2017's most satisfying releases [thus far]. You need this.



**TEMPLES
VOLCANO**
FAT POSSUM

It doesn't take too long with **Volcano** to realize that, while all the things that made the **Temples** special on their killer debut, **Sun Structures**, remain intact, an evolution has taken place. It's there from the outset: The beefed-up beats of "Certainty" reveal an expanded sonic firmament, one in which bright synth hooks and insistent choruses circle around each other over chord sequences that strike just the right balance between nice and queasy. "If there's a sense of scale," says lead singer James Bagshaw, "It was really just a result of implementing a load of things that we didn't know about the first time around." Co-founding member and bassist Thomas Walmsley describes a record in which "we discovered a lot as we went along, and the excitement at having done so radiates." One thing you do notice is that it's harder to spot the influences this time around. It would be disingenuous to evade the psych-pop tag, for sure, but mystical language has been supplanted by something a more direct. They've been broken down and blended together — fossilized into a single source of creative fuel, so that what you can hear this time around, sounds like nothing so much as **Temples**. This is the sound of a band squaring up to their potential.



**BELA FLECK
JUNO CONCERTO**
ROUNDER/CONCORD

Bela Fleck is the world's premier banjo player, a 16-time Grammy Award winner nominated in more categories than any other musician, a genre-busting collaborator, a film producer and a composer. Foremost, though, he is a dad. The impact of fatherhood on **Bela** is reflected in **Juno Concerto**, named for his firstborn son with fellow folk musician Abigail Washburn. The album was recorded with the Colorado Symphony, conducted by José Luis Gomez and includes two tracks with the Brooklyn Rider string quartet: "Griff" and the second movement of "Quintet for Banjo and Strings" — the latter a previously unrecorded collaboration with friend and mentor Edgar Meyer, representing **Bela's** first experimentation with classical music. The banjo in these movements embodies the voice of doom, interrupting the music with dark, dissonant interjections culminating in a melancholy banjo solo — a contemplative end to the album that reveals **Bela's** true depth as a composer. **Juno Concerto** is a reminder that **Bela Fleck** is among the most innovative and virtuosic musicians of our time.



**TENNIS
YOURS CONDITIONALLY**
MUTUALLY DETRIMENTAL

The husband and wife duo of Alaina Moore and Patrick Riley, otherwise known as **Tennis**, return with **Yours Conditionally**. Building on their dreamy combination of perfect melodies and classic songwriting, **Yours Conditionally** sees a full circle return to their nautical roots of sorts, with the duo even writing part of the album while sailing at sea, what Alaina calls "a grandiose gesture", a necessary venture of revisiting the past to reinvigorate the present. However, the pair dig deeper and darker this time round, with the resultant album wedding discussions of identity and self-sacrifice to some of their most pristine and infectious hooks yet. Achingly beautiful lead single "In the Morning I'll Be Better", written about the "precariousness of our lives", sums up this paradox completely, with gorgeous melodies belying its subject matter of Riley seeing a family member through a serious illness. "Please Don't Ruin This For Me" and "Fields of Blue" also deliciously straddle the light/ dark divide, while others, like "Ladies Don't Play Guitar" and the divine swoon of "Modern Woman" hit the pop bullseye square on the nose while unpacking conflicting themes of feminism and industry archetypes. This is **Tennis** at their contrary, compelling best.



**THUNDERCAT
DRUNK**
BRAINFEEDER

Stephen Bruner is best known as **Thundercat** — the funky bassist whose lightning fast fretwork has graced albums by Kendrick Lamar, Kamasi Washington, Erykah Badu, Childish Gambino, Mac Miller, Ty Dolla \$ign, Bilal, Suicidal Tendencies, and, of course, Flying Lotus, whose label, Brainfeeder, has been the home to Bruner's gloriously weird solo output. **Drunk** is the follow up to 2015's **The Beyond / Where the Giants Roam**. Following his Grammy award winning contributions on Kendrick Lamar's **To Pimp a Butterfly**, Bruner delivers arguably his most ambitious work to date — as evidence by the gonzo single, "Show You The Way," featuring Kenny Loggins and Michael McDonald! In addition to Yacht Rock Legends, **Drunk** also features the talents Kendrick Lamar, Wiz Khalifa and Pharrell, but the louche 70s vibes abound, especially on "Bus in these Streets" (which is about escaping the world at large via public transit) and "Friend Zone," a modern tale about late-night nookie — or, rather, a lack thereof. It's like a really fun Zappa album, but without the contempt for his own audience. Flying Lotus keeps the production groovy, psychedelic, and smoother than a fresh jar of Skippy. And vinyl junkies take note: The album is spread across four 10" LPs. Get it!



HIPPO CAMPUS
LANDMARK
GRAND JURY

From the resplendent "Way It Goes," a guitar led gallop about the Instagram-filtered church of cool, to the propulsive "Boyish," a horn-kissed rumination on children of divorce, *landmark* – the debut album from Minneapolis' **Hippo Campus** – is shot through with a woozy dissonance between precocious wisdom and old-as-time coming of age stories. The result is a messy, brave, and earnest whole – not to mention, a tectonic shift forward for a young band still discovering itself. After a 10-month stretch of work informed by their surprising ascent (via a couple of fantastic EPs), **Hippo Campus'** first full-length showcases not only their trademark ear for ringing melodies and impeccably constructed pop frameworks, but a desire to dig deeper—both into their talent and in their selves—for inspiration. *landmark* is rife with up-close lyrics that reflect the struggles of crash-landing into an always-on world. "It's our most honest release yet, but it didn't start that way at all," says guitarist / vocalist Jake Luppen. "There are two halves to the record—the first half represents our first stage of writing, where we're showing off our ironic side and criticizing the culture of social media, and the youth culture that we're a huge part of now." Indeed, *landmark* invites introspection and close listening.



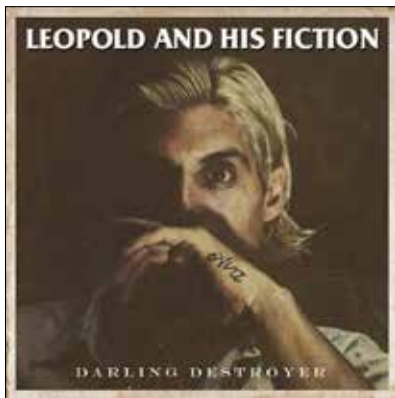
NOAM PIKELNY
UNIVERSAL FAVORITE
ROUNDER/CONCORD

Noam Pikelny has emerged as the preeminent banjoist of his generation. He is a founding member of Punch Brothers, a 3-time Grammy Nominee and was awarded the first annual Steve Martin Prize for Excellence in Banjo and Bluegrass in 2010. *Universal Favorite* is the fourth record **Pikelny** has released under his own name, but it's truly his solo debut. His previous solo efforts—including 2014's landmark *Noam Pikelny Plays Kenny Baker Plays Bill Monroe*—were full-band affairs that revealed his abilities as a dynamic bandleader while reinforcing his reputation as an inventive accompanist. The new release features only the man himself, playing lovely originals and covers that showcase his unique approach to the instrument and compositional flair. He recorded them live in the studio without accompaniment, coaxing a wide array of sounds and colors out of his instruments, embracing the challenges and exploring the new possibilities of the solo setting. And, for the first time in his career, **Pikelny** even sings. It turns out he has a striking deadpan baritone that conveys humor and melancholy in equal measure. This album, he says, is "is the most personal statement I've put forward. The setting couldn't be more stark and I think it lays bare my musical core."



ROBERT RANDOLPH
AND THE FAMILY BAND
GOT SOUL
MASTERWORKS

Pedal-steel virtuoso Robert Randolph returns with his new album, *Got Soul*. The album reaffirms that **Randolph and his Family Band** have truly evolved into one of the most exciting and innovative outfits in contemporary music. *Got Soul* takes stock of **Randolph's** past as a church musician as it pushes the band forward into new places. On *Got Soul*, **Robert Randolph** and the Family Band walk that line deftly, displaying their virtuosity within the context of a dozen smartly crafted tunes. There is no shortage of originality on the album with songs that run the gamut from gospel numbers to deep, funky grooves to incendiary rock-and-soul jams. The hauntingly exquisite "Heaven's Calling" features **Randolph** on solo steel while guest vocalists Darius Rucker and Anthony Hamilton lend their golden voices to "Love Do What It Do" and "She Got Soul" respectively. "I Thank You," the 60s Sam & Dave R&B smash, is completely re-imagined in the hands of **the Family Band** and Snarky Puppy's Cory Henry.



LEOPOLD AND HIS FICTION
DARLING DESTROYER
INDEPENDENT LABEL ALLIANCE

The fourth full-length from **Leopold and His Fiction**, *Darling Destroyer* echoes that urgency with a savage yet soulful sound testifying to Daniel Leopold's Detroit heritage. "I hear my upbringing in this album more than anything I've ever done in my life," Daniel says. "The songs were telling me, 'This is what you're made of, so trust it.'" Equally rooted in dingy garage punk and Motown's pop-minded R&B, *Darling Destroyer* burns with a frenzied intensity true to its emotional origins. Throughout *Darling Destroyer*, **Leopold and His Fiction** reveal their gritty ingenuity by merging delicately crafted lyrics with blistering guitar work. Co-produced by Daniel and Chris "Frenchie" Smith (...And You Will Know Us By The Trail of Dead, Jet, Sixteen Deluxe), the album gracefully veers from the self-mythologizing swagger of "Cowboy" and sinister reverie of "Boy" to the dreamy doo-wop of "I'm Better Off Alone" and lilting folk of "Who Am I." On "Free," agitated rhythms and fuzzed-out basslines make for a blissfully frantic lone-wolf anthem, while "Flowers" matches its confessional complexity with the slow burn of the song's horn-powered arrangement.



SOUTHERN AVENUE
SOUTHERN AVENUE
STAX/CONCORD

Southern Avenue is a Memphis street that runs from the easternmost part of the city limits all the way to Soulsville, the original home of Stax Records. *Southern Avenue* is also the name of a fiery young Memphis quintet that embodies its home city's deep musical traditions, while adding a youthful spirit and dynamic energy all its own. "If Memphis music is a genre, this is it!" proclaims *American Blues Scene*. Their self-titled debut is a breath of fresh air with its own unique blend of gospel-tinged R&B vocals, roots/blues-based guitar work and soul-inspired songwriting. *Southern Avenue* encompasses Memphis-born, church-bred sisters Tierinii and Tikyra Jackson, respectively a soulful, charismatic singer and a subtle, powerful drummer; guitarist Ori Naftaly, an Israeli-born blues disciple who first came to America as an acclaimed solo artist; versatile jazz-inspired bassist Daniel McKee; and the band's newest addition, keyboardist Jeremy Powell, an early alumnus of Stax's legendary music academy. "I feel like being on Stax is a responsibility," says Tierinii. "I grew up in Memphis... It was a constant presence, and now it's up to us to live up to that. I want to change the world, but Memphis is home."