

TOD LIPPY'S *MIDTERMS* DROPS JULY 15



Photo by Tom Krueger

The midterm elections are approaching—and so is *Midterms*, Tod Lippy's new EP that reckons with the collective dread inspired by the current sociopolitical climate.

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Let's face it, there's plenty to worry about: an endless pandemic, accelerated global warming, normalized extremism, off-the-rails social media, hyper-polarization, etc. *Midterms*, Lippy's third release following the acclaimed LPs *Here We Are* (2019) and *Yearbook* (2021), takes square aim at all of the above in six powerful songs that demonstrate the artist's continuing evolution as a composer and lyricist.

The EP opens in a deceptively mellow vein: A soothing classical guitar solo introduces "We Have a Winner," a track Lippy wrote after seeing a viral 2021 Instagram video of Tucker Carlson's run-in with a fly-fishing guide named Dan Bailey in a Montana sporting-goods store. In the video, Bailey denounces the Fox News personality as "the worst human being known to mankind," a quote that inspired the song's disjunctively

buoyant chorus. The EP's closing track, the eerie, metronomic "Happy Ending," gives musical form to the obsessive see-sawing from blind optimism ("Maybe the crazies and the snakes-in-waiting will wear out") to deep fear ("That's what they said...then") that anxious minds across the political spectrum are experiencing in these uncertain times.

Between those bookends, the other 4 tracks on *Midterms* run the gamut from a stripped-down meditation on a serious lapse in judgment ("Bob") to a wry take on the armchair activism offered by corporate America ("Consumer Good"). The EP's brightest spot, "Assorted Hits 11," is a no-holds-barred banger, celebrating the power of art (in the song's case, '80s New Wave music) to help the marginalized feel seen in a culture that would rather look the other way. Lippy has gained a following for his inventive covers of songs by artists ranging from Bing Crosby to Book of Love; on *Midterms*, he transforms "Adam," a rousing bonus track on (Sandy) Alex G's 2012 LP *Trick* about a bully's secret obsession with his victim, into a ballad driven by a mournful cello riff by **Serafim Smigelskiy** (Tesla Quartet).

Smigelskiy wasn't the only musician that Lippy, a multi-instrumentalist who has usually worked solo, ended up collaborating with on *Midterms*. He also enlisted **Jeff Lipstein** (Clem Snide) to handle percussion, and was so happy with Lipstein's drumming that he asked him to mix the record as well. The result, which Lippy self-produced after working with the legendary **Kramer** on his first two albums, is his richest sonic effort to date. "Working with Kramer was an unforgettable experience—and an incredible education," Lippy says. "*Midterms* is a reflection of all I learned from him, but it's also a testament to Jeff's formidable skills as a musician and mixer."

Midterms will drop digitally on July 15, and a lathe-cut 10" vinyl version will be out in August. All 50 copies of the limited edition will feature original hand-painted covers by celebrated artist **Steve Keene**, the creator of iconic covers for Pavement, Cat Power, and The Shins, among others.

The EP's first single, "Bob," will be released on June 17 on all digital platforms along with an [accompanying music video](#) directed by filmmaker **Brian Padian** (Amazon's *Microaggressions*).

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