

	Artist/Song	Politicality	Sample	Notes
1	billy woods	10	Slash and burn, the past is never far Reaching with chopped arms, lopped hands, no spare parts The band played "Those Were the Days," I watched 'em hang	<p>The album stretches the strategy of cultural reference, used since rap's beginnings to its outer limit, to interrogate the central question of Black identity in the face of African colonization. For a glimpse into its sheer density of reference, check the analysis from the genius website:</p> <p><i>Slash and burn refers to a method of agricultural clearing used to cultivate land for growing crops. It was extensively used during Imperial and Colonial eras in order to construct plantations and farms for cash-crops. Today it is still used in many underdeveloped countries for the exact same purpose, except by firms with corrupt state officials turning blind eyes, hence: "the past is never far"</i></p> <p><i>Here, woods describes how Africans reach for the same economic power that colonists used to accumulate generational wealth while traumatising Africans for generations. Chopped arms and lopped hands is specific use of imagery referencing King Leopold II of Belgium, a recurring character in the billy woods canon. Leopold is renown for his atrocities in the Congo Free State, his own personal fiefdom. One method of punishment was cutting off appendages including hands, feet, and their genitalia if tribes or individuals were not meeting their quotas for specific commodities like rubber. [...] Here, woods directs us to understand that Africans attempting to take control of their own affairs is done with wounded bodies, crippled state apparatuses, and no money to spare.</i></p>
	Haarlem			
2	Tumi Mogorosi	10	-	<p>Proving again that lyrics aren't necessary for music to have political heft, the instrumentals and mostly wordless, sonorous choruses on this record evoke unified pride, history and pain better than rhymes. The sounds exist, as one of the song titles puts it, "At the Limit of the</p>
	The Fall			

				<p>Speakable.” From Matty’s Sputnik Music review: “... the quote ‘New black music is this: find the self, then kill it’ by US poet Amiri Baraka is at the center of the inspiration for the writing on the album. The push for bombast and power within the music seems to mirror this idea that through all the noise in this world, we can somehow kill the self and grow together through community and strengthen the bonds between all humans.”</p>
3	<p>Danger Mouse & Black Thought</p> <p>The Darkest Part</p>	9	<p>Death to Sambo, send him a bouquet and a candle I came to take back that other two-fifths of a man, so From a silhouette standin' in the aperture To a figurehead standin' in the path of a killer Young gorilla just scramblin' for Africa</p>	
4	<p>Kendrick Lamar</p> <p>Father Time</p>	9	<p>Daddy issues, hid my emotions, never expressed myself Men should never show feelings, being sensitive never helped His momma died, I asked him why he goin' back to work so soon?</p> <p>My niggas ain't got no daddy, grow up overcompensatin' Learn shit 'bout bein' a man and disguise it as bein' gangsta</p> <p>And to my partners that figured it out without a father I salute you, may your blessings be neutral to your toddlers It's crucial, they can't stop us if we see the mistakes 'Til then, let's give the women a break, grown men with daddy issues</p>	<p>Does he practice a “Cheap and Easy Radicalism” or is he “The Most Political Rapper in Modern-Day Pop Culture”? I love Kendrick and I think that even though there are legitimate problems sometimes in what he says both in his music and otherwise, his powers of analysis, his ability to uplift, and now with this last album, to even interrogate himself, can't be ignored. To say nothing of his INSANE flow and ability to over and over again bring experimental musical ideas to mainstream music. The warts-and-all public evolution of his message could not be more different from Kanye West's; it reminds me more of Public Enemy in 1990, looking at their own sexism and (internalized) racism. To follow Kendrick Lamar is truly to embark on a journey of ideas.</p>

5	Meridian Brothers	9	<p>This is the human song that announces to us about the transhuman When I look at this cell phone I realize that it is already happening the look is lost my memory is dying Everything will be replaced by the fake copy of the infiltrators already connected The Internet to my lung To my heart</p>	<p>This Colombian group fuses various Latin American styles (Metamorfosis is a synthesis of salsa dura, guaracha, and classic Cuban rhythm montuno) while the lyrics (poorly translated here courtesy of Google) tend towards surreal, humorous narratives.</p> <p>From grammy.com (even though screw the grammys): <i>"Metamorfosis" [is] a tapestry of salsa dura, guaracha, and classic Cuban rhythm montuno [...] [C]omposer and multi-instrumentalist Eblis Álvarez [says] "'Metamorfosis' explores transhumanism through its main character who imagines waking up in Kafka-esque fashion to find himself turned into a robot."</i></p>
	Metamorfosis			
6	Mavis Staples, Levon Helm	9	<p>Well, back to the 50's and 60's? That don't sound like progress to me And I know you will give consideration as a nation This is my country (my country) Doo-doo-doo</p>	<p>Raise your hand if "The Weight" performed by The Staple Singers and The Band in '76, facing off on either side of the stage in <i>The Last Waltz</i>, redefined what collaborations in music could be for you. Now more than ever.</p> <p>Also, their cover of the Stones' "The Last Time" must be heard to be believed. Also: Grayson Currin says</p>
	This Is My Country			
6	Straw Army Band	8	<p>As above, so below Are there places where the sun won't go? I've seen weapon stores, and sleeping places In the rocks there are many faces Forgotten graves, and stones that talk Unaccustomed to the daily shock Human remains and nuclear waste See them mingle in a "private" place Katabasis, the last descent Between the trenches and the ocean vents</p>	<p>This singer is great, and while the music is essentially replicating post-punk and hardcore approaches, if the effectiveness of political music is measured by its ability to make me want to join/march/raise fist then this wins. The whole The vibe here evokes <i>Dune</i> or <i>Battle of Algiers</i>, but it never overliteralizes/ oversimplifies the problem(s). Instead, the imagery stays abstract, forcing us to think.</p> <p>Katabasis is the descent into the underworld in Greek mythology.</p> <p>From JJ Skolnick's Bandcamp review: "... they are concerned not just with the processes of history and cultivating a critical and community-focused ecological worldview, but with the stories we tell ourselves about who we are as</p>
	Underland			

				<i>humans and how those stories impact our world."</i>
7	Little Simz	8	<p>And if what you hear contradicts what you read, war ready But travelled to this country for peace Crabs in a barrel, your neighbour feelin' the same shit But he might screw you if someone offers a payslip No one ever told you your mind is not to be played with No one ever taught you 'bout moderation and patience Under all the eyes and the pressure and the scrutiny Why is mental health a taboo in the Black community?</p>	
	Broken			
8	Ashenspire	8	<p>Why do the naked sew sequins, secluded in sweatshops? Why do the capitalists blame those without jobs? We're all in, all in up to our necks Horizons foreshortened with your nose to the ground The wasting starts younger than birth</p>	
	Plattenbau Persephone Praxis			
9	Black Star	8	<p>You'll never be prepared for what we facin' if you scared of confrontation So never hear what you sayin' if you bring fear to the conversation These abominations'll bomb a nation and murder entire populations Put 'em in camps, say it's mental enhance, they focus in concentration</p> <p>I'm sayin', when people tell you who they are, you should believe 'em It's heartless how they treat 'em And it's garbage that they eatin' Regardless of what they feed 'em They still starvin' for they freedom</p>	<p>East Coast Old School is back: following new records from De La Soul and A Tribe Called Quest in 2016, these Brooklyn rap legends made their 1st album in 20 years! The message is largely spiritual and internal, but savvy enough to opt for pure and simple amid the organic sinuous MadLib-produced soundscapes.</p>
	Freequency			