

Jam Base Larkin Grimm: *Parplar*

By: [Dennis Cook](#)



Curioser and curioser. Opening out like a celestial telescope and retracting into spaces of cavernous privacy and pecking glossolalia, [Larkin Grimm](#) isn't your typical girly singer-songwriter. The child of hippies once part of the [Holy Order of MANS](#) and a ramblar that prefers to sleep outdoors in the warm months, Larkin joins the other inspired iconoclasts on Michal Gira's [Young God Records](#) (Akron/Family, Fire On Fire, Devendra Banhart, The Angels of Light). Swinging between plush furred purrs and tangy trippiness, Grimm's *Parplar* (arriving October 28) is a remarkable introduction to remarkable new talent.

Shoehorned with inspired fingerpicking and Grimm's crazily elastic voice, *Parplar* contains an almost willful diversity, shrieks and experiments dueling with bed-sit intimates worthy of the great ladies of the canyon. While Grimm has been making music for a few years – both as a member of Dirty Projectors and her own free-form improvisations – this set crystallizes her talents and vision, which can be a little scattershot over the course of 40 minutes but remains ever fascinating and often downright intoxicating. Opener "They Were Wrong" is the slow curling smile that draws you in, a today child of a sound birthed by Bridget St. John and Vashti Bunyan. But, very much to Grimm's credit, she doesn't remain in what could be an easy sell to "freak folk" fans. The next track, "Ride That Cyclone," is a stormy bit of gypsy cowpoke ecstatic worship, followed by "Blond And Golden Johns," an undulating bit of prickly sensuality that juicily announces, "This mouth has wrapped around some things/ more delicious than the songs I sing." In lesser hands this would be trite titillation but Grimm is a provocateur in the dictionary sense – stirring things up with purpose, an agitator of the first order.

She keeps this hard changing bounce going for another dozen cuts, and each is fascinating in its own way, distant murmurs of Jane Siberry, Meredith Monk, Kate Bush, Sheila Chandra and other Ur mamas. Taken as a whole, her imagination is a little exhausting, most of us mere mortals not cut out for such onrushing creativity. But, it's us that need to do the adjusting because there's not a thing wrong with Larkin Grimm, who offers enzyme to our own sonic evolution. Let us hope she finds a happy catalyst stirring as she progresses on her merry way.

Here's Grimm live this past May doing perhaps this album's most charming strange track, "Be My Host."

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