

# Bandcampin': good stuff for the ears

BY BEN SALMON

For The Bulletin

**B**andcamp is an online music platform used largely by independent artists and record labels to stream songs and sell merchandise. It's also a vibrant virtual community teeming with interesting sounds just waiting to be discovered. Each week, I'll highlight three releases available on the site that are well worth your time and attention. If you find something you dig, please consider supporting the artist with a purchase.

## MADVILLAIN

### "Madvillainy"

On New Year's Eve, 2020 dealt music lovers one last blow when Jasmine Dumile, wife of the revered underground rapper MF DOOM, announced that her husband died on Halloween. DOOM was never the most famous MC in the game, but he was highly influential, and he was known as a rapper's

rapper, singularly skilled on the mic and capable of making vibrant, intricate word-play sound effortless. He was also famous for faithfully wearing a metal mask in public as part of his supervillain persona. Most of DOOM's solo albums are on Bandcamp and are worth a million listens, but the general consensus is that this 2004 collaboration with producer Madlib, under the name Madvillain, is the best thing he ever did. Plug in some headphones, give it a spin and pour one out for the man with the metal face.

## SUDAN ARCHIVES

### "Sink"

In non-pandemic years, one of my favorite things to do is to attend the annual Pickathon music festival, held each summer in a magical woodlands (actually just someone's farm) near Portland. Of course, Pickathon was canceled in 2020, and who knows if it'll

happen in 2021, which means the last time I was there was 2019, and one of the best acts I saw that year was Sudan Archives, aka Brittney Parks of Los Angeles. She stood out because there was no one else like her at the festival: Parks is a self-taught violinist who pairs that instrument's versatile rasp with hip-hop beats, R&B vibes, electronic experimentation and traditional African melodies. The result is an intoxicating blend that you might label something like avant-dance-folk 'n' soul. "Sink" is her excellent 2018 EP that I chose to highlight here at least in part because of its incredible cover art.

## STURGILL SIMPSON

### "Cuttin' Grass, Vol. 1 (The Butcher Shoppe Sessions)"

After releasing three excellent albums full of cosmic country music and soulful roots-rock — and nabbing the Best Country Album Grammy for his 2016 release "A Sail-

or's Guide to Earth" — the Kentucky-born singer-songwriter Sturgill Simpson threw the world a curveball in 2019 by pivoting to muscular synth-rock on his much-anticipated album "Sound & Fury." Then he apparently ditched his major record label (Elektra) and declared his distaste for the music industry and his intent to go back to being a fully independent artist. Step one in that journey: Hunker down in Nashville with some of Earth's finest pickers and record bluegrass versions of his old songs. Both volumes of "Cuttin' Grass" are on Bandcamp, and they're well-crafted, highly listenable reminders that a great tune is a great tune, no matter how you play it. And Simpson's got a whole bunch of great tunes to his name.

■ Ben Salmon is a Bend-based music journalist and host of *Left Of The Dial*, which airs 8-10 p.m. Thursdays on KPOV, 88.9 FM and streams at [kpv.org](http://kpv.org). You can find him on Bandcamp and Twitter at [@bcsalmon](https://twitter.com/bcsalmon).



## The Junebugs

Thursday • January 14 • 6 PM

Livestream Series Kick Off!

Join the PDX trio for a boot-stompin house party featuring fiery bluegrass and rockin' renditions of the American songbook.

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