

Bandcampin': Good stuff for your ears

BY BEN SALMON • For The Bulletin

Bandcamp 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.



STARA RZEKA, "Cień chmury nad ukrytym polem"

One of the best albums of 2013 didn't come from out of nowhere. It came from Bydgoszcz, Poland, which kind of sounds like nowhere, but is actually a city of around 350,000 people with a bustling and adventurous music scene. Bydgoszcz is the home base of Kuba Ziolk, a multi-instrumentalist and composer who writes and records music under the name Stara Rzeka.

On "Cień chmury nad ukrytym polem," Ziolk works from a foundation of acoustic folk music, onto which he builds layers of synthesizers, guitar effects, heavy echo and psychedelic

drones. The result is an album that's beautiful and just the right amount of weird.

HAMA "Houmeissa"

Mahamadou Moussa is much better known as Hama, a songwriter and synth wizard from Niamey, Niger, home to some of the most successful African bands working today, such as Bombino, Mdou Moctar and Les Filles de Illighadad. But where those acts play an often droning brand of blues-rock music, Hama's electronic pop is bright, bubbly and irresistible. It's also rooted in the traditional melodies of the re-



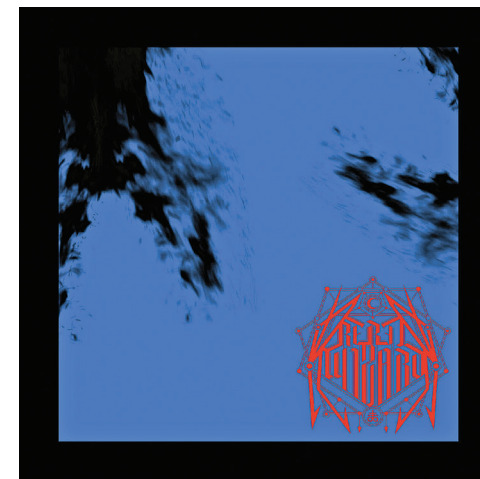
gion, which makes for quite a collision on "Houmeissa," where a modern synthwave sound meets nomadic herding ballads, ancient caravan songs and ceremonial wedding chants. It's equal parts interesting and intoxicating.

REBEL WIZARD, "Triumph of Gloom"

Melbourne, Australia, has become one of the world's great music cities in recent years, thanks in part to its burgeoning jazz scene and electronic underground, a seemingly endless supply of jangle-pop bands and breakthrough acts like Courtney Barnett and King Gizzard and the Lizard Wizard. And

then there's one-man thrash metal band Rebel Wizard, whose sound is an uncommon combo of pedal-to-the-metal rhythms and riffs, grayscale howls, heavy distortion and melodies so sharp they somehow shine through all this chaotic din. "Triumph of Gloom," from 2016, is Rebel Wizard's debut album, and it remains his most abrasive full-length, so if you check it out and it's just a bit much, definitely give last year's more accessible *Magickal Mystical Indifference* a try.

■ 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. You can find him on Bandcamp and Twitter at [@bcsalmon](https://twitter.com/bcsalmon).



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