

Up Like the Clouds by Dubl Handi

reviewed by [Steve Thorngate](#) in the [May 15, 2013](#) issue

In Review



Up Like the Clouds

by Dubl Handi

self-released, available at dublhandi.bandcamp.com

Banjo player Hilary Hawke has displayed her fine chops and deep folk foundations in several ensembles. Here she pares things down to a duo, but the sound isn't all that spare. Percussionist Brian Geltner plays aggressively—on snare drum, various

shakers and the antique washboard for which the group is named—and he’s quite forward in the mix; his occasional backbeats are the main element that locates the old-timey material in a new-timier context.

Hawke’s reedy singing isn’t that exciting, but it serves the music well. And her playing is expressive and precise. She’s adept at bluegrass fingerpicking, but the main event is her clawhammer playing—the percussive, strummed banjo of old Appalachia. It’s a thrilling sound, especially on the instrumentals that really show it off. If you know the banjo only from bluegrass—or from Bela Fleck or Sufjan Stevens—Dubl Handi will show you a whole different world.

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