

Mamma's Marmalade & Friends

Fakin' It: Covers Deserving of Coverage

"Mammas Marmalade add new ingredients to the Americana batter." - *Bluegrass Today*

Following the success of 2021's *Rabbit Analog* and their subsequent touring, New England newgrass quartet Mamma's Marmalade took a moment to rest and regroup. Bassist Dan Bisson decided it was the right time to pursue other interests, and the band found themselves in temporary limbo. Rather than put their steadily building career on hold, the band decided to call up some friends and collaborate. "This whole thing started as a conversation around who was going to join us as a bassist on our next recording project", explains lead vocalist Lily Sexton, "and that naturally progressed into deciding to just have a bunch of guests join us."

Rather than craft originals with their ever-growing group of eager guest musicians, Mamma's decided to shake things loose by working up a batch of inspired covers. "We wanted to put ourselves in the shoes of artists we've always admired" explains guitarist Sean Davis. Adds Sexton, "We wanted to pick songs by very well-known artists that may have been overlooked in their day." What they have put together is an inspired reimagining of deep-cut classics: the Bill Withers and Grover Washington cut "Just the Two of Us" features Twisted Pine, Grain Thief cruises in for Bruce Springsteen's "Highway Patrolman", Gabe Hirshfeld (banjo) and Dan Klingsberg (bass) are featured on "This Song Has No Title" by Elton John, and the Simon and Garfunkel tune "Fakin' It" get the Americana treatment with a little help from Jacob Jolliff (mandolin), Ross Martin (guitar) and Myles Sloniker (bass).

The process of creating *Fakin' It: Covers Deserving of Coverage* was both exhilarating and deeply inspiration for Mamma's. "The experience of arranging on the spot with incredibly talented musicians taught us so much" says Sexton. "We'll carry that on into our next studio project." Before getting to work on that, however, Mamma's are looking forward to a busy summer touring season in support of the new release. Each song on *Fakin' It: Covers Deserving of Coverage* not only shines a light on what might be considered unlikely influences on a string band, they have each become their own pieces of unique music, making for a deeply satisfying listening experience.

Mamma's Marmalade started in a UMass dorm room when Sexton (fiddle) and Mitch Bordage (mandolin) bonded over bluegrass. Sean Davis joined them on guitar in 2016, and the band released their debut album Goodbye, Black Velvet, the following summer. In 2019 the band released their sophomore LP Rockabee Fields. Following Rockabee Fields they welcomed Dan Bisson to the band. That time on the road paid big dividends. Written at turns in a New Orleans rental house, a minivan crossing the Ozarks, and a drafty Massachusetts garage in the middle of a springtime lockdown, Rabbit Analog is imbued with the exhilaration of journeying and discovery, and the emotional encounters that accompany that. Once the lyrics and arrangements were done and dusted, the band headed to Sleeper Cave Records, a recording studio -built in a historic mill in Haydenville, MA- to track. The band was joined by pedal steel player Rebecca Jones and banjo player Max Wareham. The song "Chicopee Kid" was written by poet Ali Telmesani. Andy Cass engineered the record and lent a hand with production.