

As a singer, guitarist and composer, Sal Baglio has touched all the bases that have rounded out a successful musical career. But with his recent work as a solo artist, Baglio embarks upon a new path that looks backward in the most delightful way. Baglio's music and solo performances dial up a past that is easily imagined in a less-distracted age where music bursts boldly out of a car's AM radio on a summer drive or floats in the imagination of a young solitary artist learning to strum his first guitar. New paths or old, Baglio projects a welcome sense of place, family and friends, a "pocket full of memories" where streets named London and Liverpool strike more than mere fancy allusions to the Beatles, the Kinks and others. They set fire in the mind of a young artist that will forever remain in his persona. Free of the demands of the music industry, Baglio is liberated to recall the past without sentimentality but with a flourish of great stories that underpin his new songs -- songs that aim for the gentle heart. Baglio will never be separated from the impulsive spirit of "American Fun", the hit he wrote with his legendary Boston band, The Stompers, that remains absolutely joyous in its sing-along refrain. Yet, as he ages -- and we with him -- Baglio reveals where all that great music began and why. His solo performances -- powerful, filled with humor and touched by the reflections of an artist still at work-- are not to be missed.

Frank Conte
Editor and Publisher EastBoston.com

"Sal Baglio's ability to be sad, poignant, witty, morbid, brilliant, hysterical, and downright ridiculous.....while being both oblique and accessible, all at the same, is unparalleled!"

Rick Harris

"Baglio is truly New England Rock Royalty and though the crown might be slightly bloodied from the wear of the road, it shines with the jewels of genius"

Brian Wheeler
Marblehead Festival of Arts

"Perhaps the most inspiring and original set of tunes we've heard yet. This manic little screwball high-school review has something all of it's own. Exquisite tunes, tirelessly referential images, soundtracky, sequential and plucked from a sparkly constellation of toys and stars. Bloody marvellous. Every tune a winner."

Alan Sargeant
CRUD MAGAZINE UK

"What follows is sheer poetry—a poignant suite that places the heart of Salvatore Baglio onto a grand musical scale. It includes most of the sensational tunes from his new album, Memory Theatre interspersed with personal favorites like "Waterloo Sunset" and "Happiness is a Warm Gun," offering sordid stories about his flamboyant past growing up in East Boston, and concluding with his transformation into a reformed, rejuvenated performer. All this laid bare with just an acoustic guitar! For this stunning personal declaration of faith, he receives a standing ovation from the transfixed audience. Phew!"

Mr. Curt

Music For Abandoned Amusement Parks

The Amplifier Heads, whose new concept album, Music For Abandoned Amusement Parks, raises the stakes for top honors in this years best of crop with a variety of beautifully arranged songs, is top of the pops this Fall and Winter.

Alan Haber
<https://purepopradio.com>

This album is a beautiful musical fairground ride which reflects on the carnival of life so joyously. It is fantastic from cover to cover... Favorite track: Freaks.

Nick Giles [Intensely Nick]
rock-radio.co.uk

Boston's Sal Baglio may be rightly largely known for his adventures in The Stompers, but it is his solo adventures as The Amplifier Heads that appeal to IDHAS most. The man is inventively prolific. You never know what to expect, but whatever it is is wonderful.

His previous album to this, Sonic Doom was a marvellous collection of lo fi recordings that would have been lauded by all if it was recorded by a 20 odd year old Indie Bedroom kid. Everything that I admire about Baglio was present. 25 songs, every one different, out Newelling Martin, Partridging

The outburst of ideas means there has already been an EP before this and an EP since, despite this album only being released this month. Here he returns to a more defined Pop. Music For Abandoned Amusement Parks is a concept album, but that doesn't mean wanky pretentiousness. This is an album that stands up in its own right.

The title gives away the subject, but more relevant is the underlying theme of lost youth and the Now v Then. There is plenty of the straight forward here. Funhouse Mirrors is American Graffiti, Candy Apple Girl is country yee haw and Ghost Song is gentle melodic Jangle.

Even in this pop laden first half, there's also room for two instrumentals, one a tumbleweed weeper, the other a summer gone affair. It is the Indie Rock that delights IDHAS most. Song For Abandoned Amusement Parks is the nearest that you will get to XTC without being XTC, Freaks is a freak out, very Guided By Voices.

Welcome To Deathworld is so Cleaners From Venus, Black Mascara could easily be on a David Lynch soundtrack and Freaks is a moody, Johnny Cash like, ending of despair. Freaks is so out of tune with the rest of the album, beautifully so. There's still time for the running title track theme to morph into a five minute finale to end a wonderful trip. The beauty of Baglio's work is that he never overdoes anything. Every idea is a say what you want to say and get off. There is so much variation here, but this is packed into 36 minutes. There is no turning three minute songs into seven, they stay at three minutes.

I can't recommend this album highly enough. I could say that this is the best thing that has ever appeared under The Amplifiers Head banner, but that would be just until the next one. Well done that Man!

Don Valentine

<https://hearsingle.blogspot.com>

*A new album by **The Amplifier Heads** is always something to look forward to, for you are always guaranteed sublime melodies beautiful lyrics and the magic spell of true rock n roll invention. Part XTC part Cleaner From Venus but mostly The Amplifier Heads psych power pop and guitar jangle meet in an album of melancholic nostalgia songs recalling the end of the summer's past.*

This 14-song album is a concept album of sorts with as mentioned the "Abandoned Amusement Arcade" being a metaphor for the passing of youth and your memories of it. So, songs of youthful abandon and abandoned youth are covered quite beautifully; leaving one with the same feeling one has after watching George Lucas's masterpiece American Graffiti.

Music for Abandoned Amusement Parks is the perfect album to soundtrack the oncoming Autumn/Winter months and anyone with a love for guitar and melody this album is a must have.

Brian Bordello

<https://monolithcocktail.com/>

"Music For Abandoned Amusement Parks" is a beautiful act of invention from Sal Baglio, who's responsible for some of the happiest long-ago rock and roll nights of my young life, but -- this is the important part -- refuses to rest on his laurels. It's a gorgeous, vibrant, fully alive piece of work from a guy at the absolute peak of his creative powers, this year, this summer, right now.

Bill Barol

<http://www.billbarol.com>

In terms of this lyricism, The Amplifier Heads new "Music for Abandoned Amusement Parks" falls somewhere in between the circus and the carnival. This is head amp head Sal Baglio's collection of pop gems, spoken epistles to dread, and plaintive and sometimes unsettling instrumentals.

Coming off the loud, brash, and brilliant "Loudah," this is another peek into the musical craft of a master who is unafraid to summon his muses. There's a little bit of Brain Wilson, Ray Davies, Duane Eddy, and Tom Waits in this musical casserole, but it's mostly Mr. Baglio exorcising quite a bit of pop anxiety regarding being shut down these last several months. He, by nature, is a journeyman and a performer, and now sees this isolation as Poe would see it. He's also an exceptional composer and such talent cannot be sealed in a cask.

Ed Morneau

<https://edwardmorneau.bandcamp.com>

Sal Baglio's Uncanny Masterpiece: Music for Abandoned Amusement Parks is a Tour de Force of Music and Storytelling

Since he began writing songs at the age of 12 in his Paris Street flat in East Boston, Sal Baglio channeled the many places of wonder around him, whether they be the long-gone Central Music shop, where he awaited the latest record release from his musical heroes; or the Sacred Heart school playground where he chased girls around; or Suffolk Downs known to him for the Beatles of 1966 not the thoroughbreds. And, then there was the most magical of places, the amusement park. In his time there were a few — Paragon Park, Pleasure Island and the closest with a Blue Line ride, Revere Beach Boulevard if one could call it that.

*These veritable little discounted Disneys are the subject of Baglio's recent work: Music for Abandoned Amusement Parks. It is—to borrow a phrase from Pete Townsend — an uncanny masterpiece. * Indeed, it is that good, so good other artists are sure to envy it. Crafted in uncertain times, MFAAP takes us away from the doldrums of the pandemic with a musical journey into a lost world. But the delightful mysteriousness commands your attention, replay upon replay.*

Great works impose themselves upon you. MFAAP is a concept album that must heard as intended by the artist: 16 pieces

of varied but short length. Heard in order from start to finish. It's not to be heard in bits and pieces in shuffle mode. No, the aesthetic unity of all the pieces draws you in as a story unfolds. Style, technique, balance, harmony and narrative are found here.

Above all, MFAAP is infused with meaning and a great sense of place delivered with the right touch. It is a pity that such music cannot break through universally.

It is a chapel with the soul of a cathedral. Short instrumentals hover over like the soundtrack of a David Lynch film, moving you along and introducing the next scene. Memories are refreshed and so are themes of joy and sadness. Invitations are announced. The opening song, "Funhouse Mirrors" commands: "Arise, arise today's the day the carnival arrives/ like the perfect birthday gift unwrapped before our eyes/ hurry, hurry let's all scurry/ for our favorite rides." An occasional mellotron punctuates the story, often complementing the harmonics of a perfectly strummed guitar. Carnival sound effects show up at the right time. When necessary, electric guitars blare, then soothe at just the right moments before exploding in cacophony as the story demands. Homages to Baglio's many influences emerge tactfully and tastefully (as in "Song for an Abandoned Amusement Park" which could well have been written by Lennon and McCartney.) There's also a swirl of Nashville there ("Candy Apple Girl") and a bit of New Wave (infused in "Black Mascara") and a touch of classical guitar ("Addio" and "Ghosts of the Promenade.")

This is more than just music. It's storytelling of the kind that an older and wiser Baglio has refined as a solo artist now that he's retired The Stompers, his legendary Boston rock band. In the spotlight alone, he does not fail to shine. Clearly this is not Freddy Cannon's "Palisades Park" (a Baglio favorite). And, it certainly is not a joy ride all the way through and good times lead to worrisome ones. In Baglio's reading, amusement parks were all magic domains of first dates, first kisses and first loves. The first half recounts these appropriate passions and all the fun: wild roller coasters, funhouse mirrors, houses of horror, arcades, candy apples and cotton candy. They hold a special place that animates Baglio's creative spirit, "a pocket full of memories... that are locked there in a world apart from everything's that's seen." But amusements parks die and memories drift. Others have stories to tell, Baglio reminds us: the tragic characters that make joy rides run: the carnies whose stories are rarely front and center. In Baglio's telling, they are the ones who "try to fit in but just get stuck." No quiet lives of desperation have ever been captured so beautifully.

"Song for an Abandoned Amusement Park" the most Beatle-esque tune with its great chorus — shifts the tone of the narrative, an almost supernatural pivot. Slowly moving toward despair, the last carney ghost dances on a wooden leg on the ground where the missing teeth of barkers are buried and where the matterhorn ride is torn down "just before the plague." Now, "The boys and girls all on the tilt-a-whirl are ghosts/ At the funhouse mirrors/ their shattered slivered hosts." The joy rides come to a close.

The album's hardest rocker is "Freaks," an edgy, defiant cry on behalf of the of the alienated carney. "I never cared for people/They're brutal and unreal/ I like to stay alone/In my trailer by the Ferris wheel/I work as a carney/With a girl name of peg/She likes to carve her name into my wooden leg." Delivered with a great guitar energy worthy of Adrian Belew, "Freaks" unveils our carney's impending fate as he mocks death marching quickly toward it but apparently just not yet. "When I die don't bury me/Scatter my ashes neath the dogwood tree/Sing a song and dance around/ And send me off to Gibson town." Baglio leads us to "Music for Abandoned Amusement Music Parks No. 2" which lends a whistling-beyond-the-graveyard feel — setting up the album's climatic piece. Here we find a master at work.

The artist takes "Freaks" and strips it to its essence revealing its loneliness before the darkness comes. Shorn of its edginess and fabulous noise, "Freaks" is transformed into "Freak," an elegy for the carney whose last midnight dance has long passed. On death's door, the carney is stoic, devoid of any future hope. Baglio's device here (in one of the album's longer pieces) is most sublime keeping it all minimal and avoiding the temptation of greater instrumentation that is better used later. His singing of the last altered lines is heartbreaking. "When I die don't bury me/ Drag my ass to that dogwood tree/Salute me with a beer and song/Leave my bones here in Gibson town." Evocative elegies do not come better than "Freak." The tears are all too real.

In the end, it is not only souls who are abandoned but the entire juggernaut. The finale — in the vein of the looping techniques found in the post-performance work of the Beatles (think Revolution 9) — conveys the collapse of the physical world leaving only the ghosts of kids and carneys in the midst. As a coda (and ironically the work's longest piece) the instrumental "Music for Abandoned Amusement Parks No. 3" swells early with a symphonic quality before giving way to tin drums and a saturnalia of guitar feedback and sound engineering that carry our ghostly voices back and forth. Tranquility comes at the end, found in the last notes of a lonesome carousel. And so, the apocalypse arrives with its beauty, terror and sheer humanity in a lost world full of distortion that can be beautiful and frightening at the same time. * *

The term masterpiece is thrown around too recklessly in contemporary culture. It would take some undertaking of a godly pursuit to think of Music for Abandoned Amusement Parks as anything other than a masterpiece.

Frank Conte

It was so dark and I was afraid. I couldn't get home fast enough, but I couldn't run. When I burst through the door an array of brightly festooned clowns—their polka dot clown shoes bolted to the floor—were swaying on springs. They had boxing gloves for hands and beckoned—no, I say—they dared me to pass through the gauntlet. Their eyes would roll back into their heads as they laughed. I woke up screaming. My dad fetched me a glass of water and I probably pissed my bed.

Earlier in the evening my sister took me and my brothers to a carnival, which, by this time in small town America, was a slapdash combination of circus, carnival, and amusement park hodgepodge, orchestrated by grifters who masqueraded as carneys. My uncle used to tell me stories of when the circus came to town every year. It would occupy a little-used patch of land in a neglected neighborhood, and would transform it into something other-worldly. I liked the circus, carnivals not so much, and amusement parks fell somewhere in between. The lyricism of all three stir in every kid a suspension of disbelief and a desire to be startled, invoking the notion that a group of vagabonds were coming to town to ply its folk with craft, lore, and tricks and, therefore, to stop time. This was as old as storytelling itself.

In terms of this lyricism, *The Amplifier Heads* new "Music for Abandoned Amusement Parks" falls somewhere in between the circus and the carnival. This is head amp head Sal Baglio's collection of pop gems, spoken epistles to dread, and plaintive and sometimes unsettling instrumentals. Coming off the loud, brash, and brilliant "Loudah," this is another peek into the musical craft of a master who is unafraid to summon his muses. There's a little bit of Brain Wilson, Ray Davies, Duane Eddy, and Tom Waits in this musical casserole, but it's mostly Mr. Baglio exorcising quite a bit of pop anxiety regarding being shut down these last several months. He, by nature, is a journeyman and a performer, and now sees this isolation as Poe would see it. He's also an exceptional composer and such talent cannot be sealed in a cask.

The great poet William Wordsworth said of poetry that lyricism is an expression of an emotion that conjures a new emotion. Without ever mentioning it by name, Baglio sees the whole farce surrounding the winter, spring, and summer of our discontent as an amusement park, broken and abandoned. Whether that's his intention is beside the point. He conjures that in me and the symmetry of emotion makes me feel less alone.

Ed Morneau

SaturnalienS

When I was a kid I had this recurring dream that I was on some old rickety wooden roller coaster with my father at Revere Beach or Paragon Park, and the car suddenly accelerated, then derailed and we flew off into an unknown darkening sky screaming the night away. I was reminded of that dream last year when Sal Baglio's *Amplifier Heads*' quarantined-influenced album, *Music for Abandoned Amusement Parks*, captured the insulation from the cruel world we felt as kids when we spent time at these amusement parks, the neighborhood carnivals, or anything that would make us believe the summer would last forever.

With a new full-length album, *SaturnalienS*, Baglio and his *Amplifier Heads* leave the darkening sky and head into some Palisades Park reconstruction of outer space, or maybe some inner space, where Baglio's deft musical architecture invokes his deepest passions. From the surf-space guitar-drums-bass, Farfisa adventurism of *The Ventures* and *The Marketts*, to the sturdy provenance of how legions of bands over seven decades took that instrumental combo format and mercilessly removed the puffery out of pop and gilded it with fire and noise, *SaturnalienS* is the new Tesseract of the once blessedly familiar. Everything is familiar, but strange, full of wit and absurdity and often hilarious.

The first cut, "Ghost Star Rider" is an homage to the journey-to-the-stars ethos of *Ventures-Marketts-Tornadoes* space rock. Something that I always loved about 60's instrumentals was the innocence that is articulated by the effort to compose heartfelt melodies over a arrangement of instruments dutifully metallic and plastic, but in service to some shiny beauty.

What follows is a hilariously wild suite of Baglio's sturdy and reliable forays into straightforward rock and roll with just enough odd changes to keep things off balance, while remaining respectful of his muses. Unexpected vocal turns, guitar ferocity, melody, a zany lyricism ("Earth Girls on the Loose," "Rock and Roll Anesthesia," "Glamorama" in particular), and its a furious rush into the future past. Not one of these tunes is throwaway space debris. These pop meteorites rip through too many rock forms with a laser focus on adding the now expected sturdy bagadelia to the chord changes and vocals. Add about fourteen stations of cross pollination of guitaristry to these songs and this writer is inspired to NOT sell his Les Paul for another acoustic guitar. That said, the quadruple entendres of "Candi Starr" can make one forget about guitars altogether. If there is a better lyric than "Sometimes a screw is just a screw...sometimes you hit the nail on the head," I don't know what it is.

And then there's Baglio briefly turning his back on this glorious noise for some pure pop majesty with the brilliant "The House of Young Dolls." This would fit nicely on any Beatles, Beach Boys, Kinks greatest hits. Such a shame we don't hear this kind of craft on the present radio of forgotten songs. Weird that the penultimate "The Amp Has Lost Its Head" has similar foreboding sympathies, with a middle eight that is as sad as it is frightening. I see Mr. Baglio, his last words—"Gimme my guitar, gimme my guitar for fuck's sake! The chords, the chords!"—like Kurtz in "Apocalypse Now": "The horror...the horror." But it's a brief moment of despair, as the last tune lifts off. "On the Moon" invokes what all dreamers desire—to seek some kind of solace and peace away from earthbound madness. "It's nice to be in orbit."

Ed Morneau

Holy wow! What a trip the new album is! Fantastic and glorious. It's like you leave our atmosphere and the astronaut vocals crackle to life as you enter space... and then you land on the moon and everything settles as you experience a glorious

show (Moonstock) featuring homages to glam, Bowie, sing-along-pop, and pure rock 'n' roll. SaturnalienS is Space Age Rock 'n' Roll the way our founding fathers envisioned it in the 1950s... only better!
Steve "Spaz" Schnee

"Goddamn, this is the great lost Marc Bolan, Eddie Cochran, and Johnny Thunders supergroup corker!"
Scott Hudson
The Ledge

The Man With The Sun For A Head is a massive POP explosion.

The Amplifier Heads present a brand-new three song EP that welcomes and celebrates summertime. But don't expect a musical homage to the Beach Boys. Instead, this release finds Sal Baglio and friends celebrating Summer with plenty of guitars, good vibes and some bitchin' melodies. "The Man With The Sun For A Head" is a massive POP explosion. While you may initially find it inspired by The Beatles, you'll soon smash headfirst into a wall of chugging guitars, swirling keyboards, delicious harmonies and a few hooks that will be bouncing around inside your noggin for a few days. So much joy to be found. This is what Rock 'n' Roll is all about. The two 'B-sides' are short, sweet, musical ideas that embrace the memories of past summers, one with glee [SodiPop] and one with just a hint of melancholia [Summerhead]. Strange how Baglio's B-sides [Baglio-Sides?] are catchier than a lot of bands entire catalog. Forty years on and Sal Baglio is still at the top of his game.
Steve "Spaz" Schnee

Simply joyous pop...

"Three simple, joyous, and simply joyous pop ditties that are as refreshing as a cool breeze."
John M. Borack
<https://www.goldminemag.com>

"**The Amplifier Heads'** wondrous "The Man with the Sun for a Head," a retro, upbeat slice of tuneful pop"
Alan Haber
<https://pureopradio.com>

Love to see a whole album of Sal Baglio's prayers. The summer would last forever.

It takes a tunesmith like Sal Baglio to wipe out the plague with one EP about the sun and the summer. Summoning melodies that melt like popsicles from his past, he gives us the ambitious Beatle-Brian Wilsonesque "The Man with the Sun for a Head," featuring the nice accordion, melodica and hair raising back up vocals of Ruby Bird of Bird Mancini and the the ever crisp and reliable Englishman, Dave Mattacks (Fairport Convention, XTC). Like the late, great Kevin Gilbert (Sheryl Crow, Toy Matinee) would say: "There are more hooks in this song than in a tackle box."

On "SodiPop" you can sense the sweet stickiness and fizz of the understated guitars swirling about the sweet melody as Mr. Baglio quenches his summer thirst. And on "Summerhead, with little more than an acoustic guitar, he creates an unrelenting chant evoking a paeon to Solaris—a thanksgiving for the summer sun.

A perfect trio of songs for such imperfect times. Another reminder to me that we are surrounded by artists who lovingly engage their own debt to what makes them make music and make it with passion and originality. Love to see a whole album of Sal Baglio's prayers. The summer would last forever.
Edward Morneau

...sparkle and bathe in a glow of sunshine psyche

Although at the moment of typing it is currently raining cats and dogs, but even the inclement weather cannot put a dampener on this fine EP of XTC like pop wonder. The lead off title-track is a fine example of how to make let's throw the kitchen sink at it work. A song of bright sunshine goodness leaps from the speakers leaving the room to sparkle and bathe in

a glow of sunshine psyche so much so that it could easily hold its own on XTC's excellent Oranges And Lemons album: a song so British sounding it could have only been made by a American. If this was 1967 I would predict a hit single in the offing.

Brian Bordello
<http://monolithcocktail.com>

Loudah

"The Amplifier Heads is full of wonderfully catchy rock which I expected but it's also one of the best recorded and mixed independent projects I've ever heard."

Bill Lloyd

"For sheer amplitudal melotraumatic nirvana, "Loudah" belongs with The Move's "Shazam" and Bowie's "The Man Who Sold The World"

Every cut a gem!"
Ed Morneau

"This record is so fucking good that I need to yell about it from my cyber rooftop! It's just the best straight out rock and roll record I've heard in I dunno how long . It's got elements of Cheap Trick , Big Star , what we all hope The Beatles sounded like at 3am in a Munich club in '62 , Little Richard, Arnie Woo Woo Ginsberg , the zero fucks given of true punk and the romantic heart of an Eastie kid . It's next level rock and roll in only the way a true believer like [Sal Baglio](#) can do it . His songs all are just a rocking testament to a lifetime love affair with rock and roll , and a fierce devotion to it . This stuff is so in his DNA that theres an exuberance in this record that is just beautiful. It's rock and roll as s religion that refuses to take itself too seriously by a guy with a gift for song craft honed over decades of doing it who clearly doesn't give a fuck beyond cranking it up and getting sanctified . If you love rock and roll , you need to hear this record. Brothers and sisters... THIS is how it's done!"

Jesse Vonkenmore
Hot Rod Drummer