

Sarah Chapman Charts Big with Her “Grassicana”

Sarah Chapman Charts Big with Her “Grassicana”

by Kara Martinez Bachman

At only 22 years old, so much has already happened to Sarah Chapman...and she's only just begun. This country-bluegrass singer hailing from northeastern Alabama has met with recent success that's both unexpected and exciting.

“It's very surreal,” Chapman said, of the fact that *three* of the songs from her first album, titled “Winnebago,” charted. “I see all these songs, and I'm on the same charts with people I look up to. It's so cool. It's *so cool*.”

Her influences include Alison Krauss, Miranda Lambert, Kacey Musgraves, Lee Ann Womack, and Val Storey. Chapman offers a country sound, but there's some bluegrass in there, too. It's “Grassicana.”

“I've got a lot of country roots,” Chapman explained, “but I did grow up in bluegrass festivals as well. Having the country roots helps my generation cross over into bluegrass and enjoy it as well.”

She explained, “People want to listen to something they relate to. As times change, you have to change as well.” She said it's important to, “keep some of the roots” the music is based on but make it relevant to new listeners.”



On the day she spoke with *The Bluegrass Standard*, she was basking in the glow of a number that's currently doing great. Her song "Angry Weather" was – on that day – at #8 on the Bluegrass Today chart.

It's spurring her on to bigger and better things, including a duet she decided to announce via *The Bluegrass Standard*.

"I went into the studio to cut a country song," she said. She was working with producer Buddy Hyatt, who she described as a kind of musical jack-of-all-trades – he's played bass, mandolin, banjo, and guitar on her recordings. She said he's

also been good at introducing her to people. One of these people was former Statler Brother – and for the past 20 years, solo performer and songwriter – Jimmy Fortune.

She asked Hyatt if there was any way to get Fortune to help with a backing vocal on the as-of-yet unreleased song, “The Healing Kind.” As it turns out, he was willing to do more ... it turned instead into a duet.

“He cut the duet with us and it was just beautiful,” Chapman said. “I know I’m definitely gonna release it as a single.” No date was given for when the song will drop.

The quick success of Chapman this year has been getting attention in the press, including

interview requests from print media and radio stations.

“I just got an email from a radio station in Germany,” she said, a hint of amazement in her voice.

Chapman has been affected by the Covid-19 social distancing, just as most performers have been.

“It’s definitely affected me, especially releasing it [the album] right in the middle of it,” she said. She’s particularly bummed about a gig that was canceled where she “was so excited...it was right before Rhonda Vincent!”

She’s not only using the “downtime” to watch her songs rise in the charts; she’s using it to plan her next career move.

“I’m getting writers pitching me songs...I’m trying to look through those and see which direction I’m gonna go,” she said, indicating she’s planning for the next full record.

Maybe it’s been clear since she was a little kid that Chapman was destined for a life in the biz. Her dad was a banjo player, and she’d go with him to many performances at bluegrass festivals. The music – and the performing life –

rubbed off on her. There came a day when she asked herself a question that had an easy answer.

“Hey, maybe sitting in the crowd isn’t for me,” she said to herself. “Maybe I want to be up on that stage as well.”

<https://youtu.be/Q1Z4PEWplzg>