

## Europe REVIEWS

double flute which he plays on 'Iker' (Twin) and the deep flute of 'Udzsapo', the most dynamic track with growling and grunting. 'Aer' is a calmer piece with a Romanian-sounding *doina*-like melody over arpeggiated notes. On the album, Salamon says very explicitly that none of these are traditional pieces, but obviously all inspired by his knowledge of and work with traditional flutes across the region. *Tudat Alatt* means 'subconscious' and this is what Salamon's flute research has brought out of his subconscious. Although much of the music might seem simple there's virtuoso playing here.

SIMON BROUGHTON

TRACK TO TRY *Iker* (Twin)

### Cosmo Sheldrake Wild Wet World

Tardigrade



Sheldrake's previous album was the excellent *Wake Up Calls*, featuring music and sound set to

birdsong, in order to 'help us become more aware of the glorious polyphonic soundworlds that surround us before many of these voices become extinct.' Three years on comes this compact new set of recordings, from below the surface of the waters, fused with sound patterns and a vocal from the human realm. *Wild Wet World* promises more ocean-going fun and variety than most non-aquatic orchestras – 'humpback whales singing, sperm whales clicking, weddell seals courting, coral reefs spluttering, shrimp snapping... blue whales lamenting,' even the sound of 'haddock drumming'. All the musicians are natives of endangered habitats. Sheldrake recorded some himself with aquarian hydrophones, others come from Monterey Bay Aquarium and the US veteran soundscape ecologist Bernie Krause. They are fused with his own music from above the surface, complete with lyrics and a well-spoken vocal style on album opener 'Bathed in Sound' that's reminiscent of Brian Eno's occasional forays behind the mic. The rest of it is instrumental, or 'sung' in the languages of the sea, and

full of strange sonic emanations from the depths and shallows. Half his royalties will go to various charities and organisations.

TIM CUMMING

TRACK TO TRY *Bodies of Water*

### VARIOUS ARTISTS

#### A Collection of Songs in the Traditional & Sean-Nós Style

Nyahh Records



Drawn from several generations of unaccompanied traditional singers, these are freshly recorded and

collected, aside from Rosie Stewart's 'Jug of Punch' and Sarah Ghriallais' 'An Sceilpín Draighneach', which have appeared on earlier albums.

The majority are recordings done on the singer's phones, or otherwise captured in kitchens, sitting rooms, upstairs rooms, pub rooms. As such,

it's a direct and raw transfusion from the underbelly of Irish singing traditions, with a focus on the melodic ornamentation of *sean nós*.

Take Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin's account of 'Eileanóir na Rúin' (Eileanóir of the Secrets), which dates from the 15th century and is one of the oldest love songs in the *sean nós* style, recorded in Galway's Stiúideo Cuan, upstairs in its green room, which must be one of this world's great echo chambers. Further in, Méabh Meir channels the song spirits of Jeannie Robertson and Belle Stewart for 'Queen Among the Heather', and the great Irish Traveller singer and storyteller Thomas McCarthy is captured in full flow at the Cobblestone pub in Smithfield, Dublin, singing 'The Wicklow Mountains High'. *A Collection of Songs* closes with the stunning voice of Connemara singer Sarah Ghriallais on 'An Sceilpín Draighneach' (The Hawthorn Bush), a song of love so unrequited it may haunt you to your grave.

TIM CUMMING

TRACK TO TRY *Eileanóir na Rú* by Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin

## BRITISH & IRISH FOLK by Nathaniel Handy

The debut album from Welsh folk music stars **Angharad Jenkins & Patrick Rimes** is a cause for much excitement. Founder members of the group Calan, and with Jenkins the scion of a Welsh folk dynasty (she also plays with her mother, harpist Delyth Jenkins), the pair bring great musicianship and an intuitive musical partnership to *amrud* (Tŷ Cerdd Records \*\*\*\*), meaning 'raw' in Welsh. Jenkins plays fiddle and sings while Rimes plays viola, piano and foot percussion. The album is a mix of traditional and self-penned tracks, revealing the same respectful yet adventurous attitude so long exemplified by Calan.

Rimes also makes an appearance on the latest album from harpist, **Gwenan Gibbard**. Hailing from the wild Llŷn Peninsula in the far north-west of Wales, Gibbard is a leading practitioner of *cerdd dant* – the singing of Welsh poetry to the accompaniment of the Celtic harp. Academically trained and with longstanding recognition at the esteemed National Eisteddfod – the nation's preeminent cultural gathering – her fifth studio album *Hen Ganeuon Newydd* (Sain \*\*\*\*), meaning 'New Old Songs', is a collection of folk songs of Llŷn and Eifionydd (a neighbouring region) collected at the turn of the 20th century. She is also joined by Gwilym Bowen Rhys (guitar, *bouzouki* and mandolin) and Aled Wyn Hughes (bass).

Crossing the Irish Sea, another treat awaits. A debut from veteran Clare fiddler, **Tony Linnane**, recorded on location in his kitchen in Ennis with pianist Catherine McHugh, flautists Éamon O'Riordan and Jim O'Connor, Mary Bergin on

whistle, Pádraig Ó Dubhghaill on guitar and Mick Conneely on bouzouki. *Ceol na Fiddle* (Raelach Records \*\*\*\*), meaning simply 'Music of the Fiddle' in Gaelic, holds the poise of an over 40-year career and is as close as you can get to a real Irish session without taking off your boots and swimming to County Clare.

Meanwhile, from Tulla, County Clare comes a fiddler of the next generation, Gradam Ceoil 2021 Young Musician of the Year, **Sorcha Costello**. Like Linnane, she is accompanied by Catherine McHugh on keys, alongside John Blake on guitar and bouzouki, on her first solo album, *The Primrose Lass* (Sorcha Costello \*\*\*\*), a collection of old and new fiddle tunes rooted in the East Clare style. Playing since she was a small child, Costello brings a family lineage with her from accordionists Tony MacMahon (her grand-uncle) and her mother and uncle, Mary and Andrew MacNamara, with whom she has often performed.

Crossing back to Scotland, Glasgow indie-folk trio **Snows of Yesteryear** have released their debut self-titled album (*Snows of Yesteryear* \*\*\*). The indie in their indie-folk points to a certain iconoclastic experimentalism in singer Kat Orr, guitarist David Mitchell and violinist Yuuka Yamada-Garner. While deep into Scottish folk music, they are also mining other seams, as illustrated by some of their guests and fellow travellers, such as cellist Su-a Lee, clarinetist Samuel Da Silva and trumpeter Bence Táborzsky. The songs have a dark undertow, like all the best folk music, ruminating on an often harsh natural world and the losses of tragedy and trauma.



Finally, we turn south across the border into England, to the vibrant folk scene of Sheffield in Yorkshire, where the trio **Auka** acknowledge the shared roots of these isles in their band name, from the Old Norse 'to grow'. Here, they meld flute, whistles and guitar on their second studio release, *Wild Waters* (Auka \*\*). A paean to wild rivers and streams, the album promotes the trio's strong connections with the Right to Roam and wild swimming movements, appropriate given their proximity to the Peak District, the site of the Kinder Trespass of the 1930s that ignited the movement in the first place.

Joie Penn