

The Antiquan Graveyard, about the sailors who succumbed to disease while protecting the colony, is very impressive. *The Rapper Set* is a lively mix: a calling on song (from which the album's title is taken) followed by *Drummond Castle* and *Seven Stars* rendered by mouth music, with Will Finn stepping like a good'un. It would have made a strong opener. Things calm down for the last song, *Journey's End* (Judy Goodenough's poem put to music by Tommy Makem).

And that's your lot, at only 32 minutes. My only criticism of a lovely album is that it left me wanting much more.

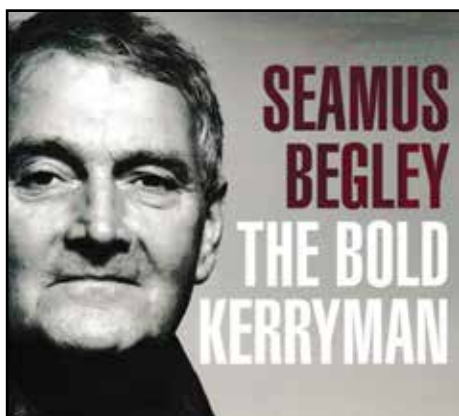
www.theteacups.co.uk

Tony Hendry

SEAMUS BEGLEY

The Bold Kerryman

Independent Records Ltd IRL093



Singer, accordionist and storyteller Séamus hails from the Gaeltacht of Dingle in Co. Kerry. He's been recording since 1972: initially with his sister Máire and then in tandem with guitarists, firstly Steve Cooney and more recently Jim Murray. Over the past few years he's toured with Jon Sanders, and most recently with Tim Edey, who contributes some suitably skilled and lucid playing to several tracks on *The Bold Kerryman*, Séamus's latest record.

Here Séamus lends his richly melodious and superbly controlled voice to a collection of predominantly traditional songs; it's clear that he's thought much about his response to these songs over the years, for they come across as considered and mature readings, measured and unhurried and singularly unpretentious – in which respect on occasion some may be thought a touch too easygoing and laid-back (a response which may stem from the listener's over-familiarity with the material rather than from any deficiency in Séamus's performances).

Most successful to my mind are the lesser-known items such as *Portland Town* (which features Meabh Begley's lovely harmony vocal), the heroic *Domhnaill Ó Conaill*, and *An Charraigh Donn* (which Séamus learnt from

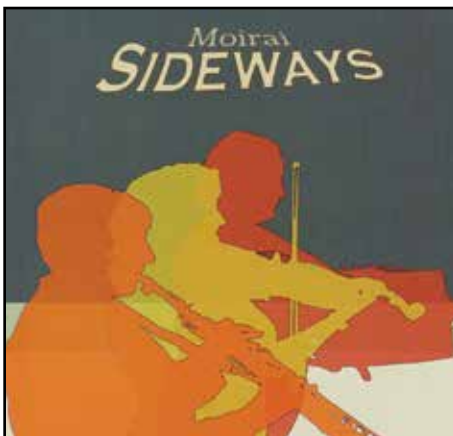
Dónal Ó Cinnéide of Ballydavid). Damien Dempsey provides guest-vocals on *Banks Of The Sweet Primroses*, one of two songs here which Séamus got from the singing of Luke Kelly. Producer John Reynolds has lent his distinctive signature to the project, supplying some percussion and gentle, almost subliminal programming which is kept in healthy perspective for Séamus's voice. For that's where the necessary focus of the album lies (there's little scope for demonstration of Séamus's accordion prowess). The album closes with a pair of contemporary folk compositions: Paul Metsers' *Farewell To The Gold* is rather nicely turned, while John Denver's *Today* is efficiently managed with a characteristic, pleasing light touch. Séamus is evidently as much at ease with these songs as he is with the purely traditional items.

David Kidman

MOIRAI

Sideways

Wildgoose Studios WGS410CD



This trio consists of Jo Freya (vocals, sax, clarinet and whistles), Melanie Briggs (vocals, melodeon and flute) and Sarah Matthews (vocals, violin, viola and guitar). The name Moirai means 'spinnors of destiny' and these three do spin some haunting and enchanting songs and arrangements. With three such auspicious talents, one would expect a CD that is a bit special and this debut album does not disappoint. It is truly a meeting of musical minds that knit together and weave some stunning vocals and music, all delivered with skill and humour.

Sideways opens with *Chassepain / Baudimic*, two bourées written by hurdy-gurdy player Gilles Chabenat. *Twiddles* is a wonderful chorus song which is followed by *The Rites Of Man* and *Roll The Old Chariot*. *Kusnacht* was learned by Mel during an aural journey across Europe and *La Chapka* is an elegant, romantic mazurka from French band, Le Gop. There are memories of a real event in *Sideways* and a tale is told in *Magpie Sitting On A Broken Fence* of how we should all pay heed to nature, find beauty in everything and not spoil it for others. Brian Pickell's composition for his mother, *Muriel's Waltz*, flows seamlessly into a

16th century English hornpipe. *Candlelight* is dedicated to Maggie Boyle and her family and a William Blake poem, *Garden Of Love*, set to music by Dave Walters, is done in memory of Ralph Jordan who is much missed.

This is a lovely album which is sure to find favour with a wide range of folkies. In Greek mythology the Moirai were the white-robed incarnations of destiny who controlled the mother thread of lifestyle of every mortal from birth to death. This CD covers every aspect of life (and death) and is certain to be well received.

www.moiraitrio.weebly.com

Kathy & Bob Drage

MARIE FIELDING

An Seisiún

Rumford Records RUMFORDCD03



Edinburgh-born and now Falkirk-based fiddler Marie Fielding is one of the hardest-working traditional musicians in Scotland, turning up in all manner of groups and dance bands. Maybe she wanted a break from all that, so came up with a "session in the pub" theme for this latest release. But we all know that such sessions are where you get the best tunes, and that's exactly what happens here.

Marie has good taste in session musicians too. Here we have Tom Orr, accordion and piano; Donogh Hennessy, guitars; Trevor Hutchinson, double bass; Jimmy Higgins, percussion; Pauline Scanlon, song; Damien Mullane, accordion; and Laura Kerr, fiddles. With all that to complement Marie's own fiddles and strings, it's guaranteed to be a cracker.

Featuring a lot of Marie's own compositions as well as some that have been around for a bit longer, this whole album has a lightness and freshness to it which carries the listener along, and truly there's not a bad track on it. The varying instrumentation adds to the variety, but it's the sheer musicianship of the whole thing which strikes home. A tip of the hat also to Donogh Hennessy, who not only adds guitar, but also produced, recorded and mixed the whole thing in Ireland, and Stuart Hamilton, who mastered it back in Scotland. The overall effect does have the feel of a session about it,