



“Old Wine/New Skins” - Various Artists
(Dusk Fire DUSKCD104)
Released October 8th 2007

‘Gleams of enduring truth’ shine in English song celebration by international artists

New album partners acclaimed “Folk Handbook”

Bucks, UK: August 21st 2007

A diverse roster of recording artists - spanning half a century between the oldest and youngest - have contributed contemporary interpretations of traditional English songs to a new album released as a companion piece to *The Folk Handbook: Working With Songs From The English Tradition*, published in the UK and US this summer by Backbeat Books.

“**Old Wine/New Skins**”, released via **Proper Music Distribution** this October 2007 on **Market Square Records’ Dusk Fire** imprint, compiles 17 songs from the book in performances all but one of which have been recorded in recent years; many have been recorded specially for this album and thus are unavailable elsewhere.

Contributors, including English, Scots, Americans and other nationalities, count **Lisa Knapp, Tom Paxton, James Yorkston, Robin & Bina Williamson** and **The Devil’s Interval** amongst others - renowned or about to be.

From time to time interest in traditional music extends beyond the boundaries that usually contain it. What all the performers here have in common is that they have been drawn to traditional music during one or other of those periodic surges of interest.

Interpretations vary delightfully in tone and genre, from the straight-playing of **James Raynard’s** “The Outlandish Knight” and **Barry Dransfield’s** “John Barleycorn”, to a sad, country-tinged “What Is The Life Of A Man?” by **Michael Weston King**, a folk-rock take of “the Broomfield Wager” by **Jacqui McShee’s Pentangle**, a nu-folk “Come Write Me Down” by **Serafina Steer**, and a chilling, folk-psych rendering of “The Unquiet Grave” by **Circulus**.

The 78 minute-long album, which also features a rare performance by 1960s cult actor/singer **Noel Harrison**, is book-ended evocatively *acappella* by rising star **Lucy Wainwright Roche’s** “Barbara Allen” and the first lady of folk, **Shirley Collins’** concluding salute in “Adieu To Old England.”

In a 20-page booklet with song-by-song artists notes, pictures, historic illustrations, music writer Mark Brend in his introductory notes asks what it is that attracts this diverse crowd to these songs of old England, putting the root cause to the evocatively-termed “gleams of enduring truth”.

‘The songs may be traditional in the sense that they have grown from the past, but they are contemporary in the sense that they speak to us now about the very stuff of life: love, the turn of the seasons, sex, romance, death,’ Brend writes.

‘Like life itself they are strange and tender and violent. It is this that will ensure that the songs will survive us all, way beyond a time when email and management consultants seem like quaint anachronisms.

‘In the meantime, what we have here is 17 performers taking brief custody of the songs, filtering them through their own experiences, styles, talents and traditions, and making something new out of the old.’

“Old Wine/New Skins” is a journey into the past celebrated by skilled musicians that have referenced these songs with love and care, in a collective work of substance and continuity that is in turn, witty, warm, charming, nostalgic, sad, unnerving ... much like life.

“Old Wine/New Skins”

Various Artists

Dusk Fire Records DUSKCD104

Released October 8th 2007 through Proper Music Distribution (UK)

Track listing:

1. Barbara Allen – Lucy Wainwright Roche 3.07 +
 2. Long Lankin – The Devil’s Interval 5.20
 3. Geordie – The Green House Band 4.17
 4. The Outlandish Knight – James Raynard 7.56
 5. O Pleasant And Delightful – Noel Harrison 3.36 +
 6. Oxford City – Julie Murphy 4.02
 7. A Blacksmith Courted Me – Lisa Knapp 5.35
 8. John Barleycorn – Barry Dransfield 3.21
 9. Edward – James Yorkston & The Athletes 6.10
 10. What Is The Life Of A Man? – Michael Weston King 4.44 +
 11. The Little Gypsy Girl – Robin & Bina Williamson 4.23 +
 12. The Bonny Labouring Boy – Sabbath Folk 4.19 +
 13. Come Write Me Down – Serafina Steer 2.00 +
 14. The Unquiet Grave – Circulus 4.03 (*previously unreleased*)
 15. The Banks of Sweet Primroses – Tom Paxton 2.59 +
 16. The Broomfield Wager – Jacqui McShee’s Pentangle 7.49
 17. Adieu To Old England – Shirley Collins 2.00
- + denotes tracks especially recorded for this album

Web contacts:

www.duskfire.co.uk

www.folkhandbook.com/

www.backbeatuk.com

www.properdistribution.com

ENDS

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About The Folk Handbook

Many of the great songs that have inspired performers around the world in the last 50 years come from the English folk song tradition. This authoritative book provides words and melodies for nearly 100 traditional songs along with a detailed exploration of their history and meaning; the context in which they arose; their value to writers and performers in Britain, America, and around the world, from Bob Dylan and Paul Simon through to the contemporary "neofolk," "urban folk," and "anti-folk" movements. It is written by experts in the subject, with the full co-operation of the English Folk Dance and Song Society. Contributors: David Atkinson, Mark Brend, Martin Carthy, John Morrish, David Sheppard, Stephanie Smith, Nigel Williamson. The book includes a CD of 14 unaccompanied songs from historic field recordings.

The Folk Handbook is launched with a companion web site at www.folkhandbook.com which includes downloadable MIDI files of the songs covered in the book, a discussion forum, and an extensive list of online resources. The book is edited by John Morrish with a foreword by Shirley Collins and is published by Backbeat Books.

About Dusk Fire Records

Dusk Fire is a British independent record label specialising in collaborative, multi-artist recordings in the fields, of jazz, folk, blues, rock. Dusk Fire is an imprint of Market Square Records, a subsidiary of Market Square Music Ltd.