

Canmore & Calgary Folk Festivals

Calgary (July 2003)

"This is the most boring place in the world!" barked some yuppie into his cellphone on Thursday night at Prince's Island. This was during Ricky Skaggs' performance! On one hand, this suggests that, contrary to some claims, the Calgary lineup does not cater exclusively to the lowest common denominator. On the other, it gave me a momentary swell of ego, a confirmation of the superiority of my own tastes. Most of the massive audience seemed quite pleased by most of the Festival, and so was I.

This was the record ticket-selling year for the Calgary Folk Festival, and I was lucky to find people seated quite near the mainstage to whom I was best known as somebody's brother but who were happy to set me up with a square of tarp nevertheless. It was absurdly hot, with only a short burst of rain coming during Slainte Mhath's mainstage set, where claps of distant thunder complemented their sound. A strange ruling by the city prevented smoking in the beer garden; I wouldn't care (there's something amusing about smoking and drinking becoming mutually exclusive activities) except for the resulting clouds of oppressive cigarette smoke everywhere else. This policy made nobody happy, and should be amended.

The sound seemed oddly ragged from time to time. I witnessed a level of communication between performers and sound people during sets, sometimes even on the mainstage. All seemed quickly remedied, and the artists didn't seem to be more than mildly dismayed, but it did work to tarnish the Festival's image of spotless professionalism. Could it be that, despite the innumerable volunteers, the Festival is actually short of people with such specific talents?

The improved numbers this year were clearly due to a concentration of big names like Elvis Costello, Ani DiFranco and Daniel Lanois, each of whom performed admirably. I particularly liked Lanois's dreamy, fine-tuned set (he was constantly tweaking dials between numbers) that sounded more like a studio recording than any live material I've ever heard. I liked DiFranco's material a lot, especially the political stuff, and in fact I enjoyed almost every solo female singer-songwriter I saw. Costello gave a mellow, comfortable performance of a no-longer-angry no-longer-young man; not what I expected, but quite welcome. In fact, "mellow" describes much of the mainstage material this year, with exceptions like Britain's fluorescent-clad fusion group Horace X. Placed in the same slot

that Michael Franti and Spearhead were in last year, Horace X failed to generate quite the same startling audience reaction, but their indescribable mix of styles seemed well-received. Myself, I'd like to have their CD just to play for people, prefaced by the question "Wanna hear something weird?".

But as usual, the most offbeat material was found away from the mainstage, where too many acts seemed overwhelmed by the immobile grandeur of the structure and often were on the stage for too short a time to make a proper impression (this was the case with Australia's The Waifs, though their mere four songs Sunday evening made me wish I had gone to some of their workshops). Too often workshops result in musicians simply trading solos, but with effort one can find some examples of genuine interaction and musical experimentation. I took a particular interest in the musicians from the Far North, appearing in conjunction with a Glenbow Museum exhibit. Sarah Nya Laakkuluk Williamson did a terrifying Greenlandic clown act, and perhaps my personal highlight was the Wisdom of the Ages workshop, with the Australian Aboriginal group White Cockatoo; I don't know if anybody's ever tried to back Inuit throatsinging with the didgeridoo before, but it's a pretty good match. Another successful workshop featured Horace X, Slainte Mhath and genial Nova Scotia hip-hop artist Buck 65 (who introduces himself as "Rich") combining their sounds into something very effective, if indescribable. And there were excellent workshops on dance, gospel, blues (the latter two both with the excellent Ruthie Foster); in short, wide enough material to cater to most tastes.

Oh, and this review cannot end without reference to the India Palace Restaurant's Curry in a Hurry, which drew me back again and again, because its sweet smell wafted to all corners of the island not overwhelmed by cigarette smoke, and the Smithrite portapotties, which somehow smelled like roses even on the fourth day. Whatever they cost, it was well worth it.

Murray Leeder, Calgary

Canmore, Alberta (August 2003)

From the moment on Saturday afternoon when the piper begins to lead the parade of advance ticket holders to the main stage for tarp placement, until the finale on Monday night when the entire audience stands to sing along with "Mary Ellen Carter" and "Four Strong Winds", you know that this is a festival

with a special friendly touch. The 26th annual Canmore Folk Festival, held on August 2-4, is a great success. The Festival features 32 workshops and 18 main stage groups. It enjoys fine weather, spectacular peaks, and wonderful music. This makes it easy to forget the haze softening the mountains and the blue sky; to ignore the faint smell of smoke in the air; and to overlook the occasional fall of small flakes of black or white wood ash from the forest fires burning to the west in British Columbia.

The eight best-received acts, based on my assessment of applause, standing ovations, record sales, and comments from audience members are, in approximate descending order of popularity, Martyn Joseph (Wales), Mary Gauthier (USA), Eric Bibb with Leon Bibb (UK and Canada), and Ruthie Foster with Cyd Cassone (USA); followed by Fruit (Australia), The Bill Hilly Band (Canada), Willie and Lobo (USA), and The Wailin' Jennys (Canada). I find it disappointing that the crowd seems to prefer the non-Canadian acts to the Canadian ones.

Canmore has a reputation among artists and among attendees as a relaxed, intimate, and happy Festival. In common with other smaller festivals across the country, the pressures of size and money haven't drained the life out of this festival. Don Hansen, one of the MCs, said that artists realise that Canmore is "less of a commercial endeavour" and "not concerned with making money, more of a real festival." There is "more contact between the artists and the public, between the artists and the volunteers." "Artists tend to take more risks, play more out on the edge," he said, and "workshops tend to be more collaborations." As if in proof the three lead women of the Australian group Fruit, Susie, Sam, and Mel, animate every workshop that they take part in, collaborating actively with the other acts on stage, and getting performers from the other acts to collaborate with them. Many of the artists have the entire audience clapping along, singing along, whistling along, yodelling along, or dancing along. Not a sit-on-your-hands audience.

Leonard Podolak, one of The Duhks, said "we've been looking forward to this festival for a long time, we've heard such great things about it."

Saturday night

On Saturday the main stage opens with Tom Phillips and the Men of Constant Sorrow (Calgary). The majority of the numbers are Tom Phillips compositions, with a lot of hurtin' country songs. The best applause comes for some of the more upbeat numbers, such as Tom's "Ride the Train of Glory

Down the Track", "Still Lovin' You" (which Tom describes as his favourite song of all time, though he doesn't know its author), and their finale, Hank Williams' "Jambalaya (On the Bayou)". On the down side, some of the group's vocal work is not always well synchronised with Tom's lead singing.

Next up are The Duhks (Winnipeg). The audience begins to warm up with their first vocal, Gillian Welch and David Rawlings' "Rock of Ages", with the lyric "Round, round, wanna go round, wanna see the Rock of Ages, till my body gives up, gonna read the gospel pages". The applause is even better for a country style version of Woody Guthrie's "Pretty Boy Floyd" and for Tommy Sands' "Your Daughters and Your Sons". The audience begins to sing along on the nonsense chorus of the Appalachian "Leather Winged Bat", and is on its feet clapping and dancing for The Duhks' two last numbers in French Canadian style, one medley beginning with the traditional "Le meunier et la jeune fille" and another medley beginning with "Roddy McCorley" (!) (words by Ethna Carberry to a traditional tune). An audience member near me says "amazing guitar" (though I feel that some of their ensemble playing could be in better tune).

The Laura Love Duo (Seattle), long time favourites at Canmore, then take the stage and begin with a number of 60s style protest songs including Laura's own "I Want You Gone" which she describes ironically as "a kind of a love letter to our president George Bush." The crowd comes alive with very enthusiastic applause for her amazing *a cappella* performance of the gospel song "Blind Bartimus". There is applause to greet the first lines of Laura's "I'm a Givin' Way" with its evocative line "I'm the only shade in a thousand miles of sun" and very good applause at its conclusion. Laura is especially relaxed with this audience, and they love it. There follows an interesting jazz/country influenced interpretation of "Amazing Grace". There is an unfortunate loss of connection with the audience during Laura's offering of Jimmie Rodgers and E.T. Cozzens' "In My Dear Old Southern Home" when she tries to get the audience yodelling along with the yodelling chorus. It is asking more than the crowd is comfortable trying tonight. The number of people standing to request the encore is probably less than it might otherwise have been. Laura encores with Stevie Wonder's "Higher Ground".

Topping the bill on Saturday night are Leon and Eric Bibb, father and son (Vancouver and England respectively). These two, and especially Leon, will turn out to be the hit of the festival for most of the crowd. Some of the audience give them a standing

ovation to welcome them onto the stage. Their set starts with "Rainbow World" (with the lyric "I'll weave a rainbow world of magic design") to very good applause. Leon looks very much younger than his 81 years, and with his wonderfully deep rich voice he easily outclasses every other male performer at the festival. He gets very enthusiastic applause for his simple rendition of Lawrence Gellert's "Look Over Yonder (hot sun turning over)". A couple of numbers later Eric gets similar enthusiastic applause for his song "Right on Time". Their last number, for which Leon invites his granddaughter to join them on the stage (symbolic of the relaxed family nature of this event), is the spiritual "Now Let Me Fly (into Mount Zion)". The atmosphere is electric, and the crowd gives them an enthusiastic standing ovation. They give "Shenandoah", the favourite song of Paul Robeson (who is Eric's godfather), as their encore.

Sunday workshops

I get to 5 of today's 16 workshops. "Fiddlin' Around" features Willie Royal, April Verch, Calvin Cairns, Adrian Dolan, Tania Elizabeth, and Jeremy Penner. The best applause is for an improvisation by Willie on his five string fiddle, described as "inspired by Jimi" (Hendrix). The next best received is a much quieter tune with a Spanish title played by Calvin. The host of the workshop fails to ensure that everyone gets equal goes, and there is some disappointment apparent on the stage when three of the performers don't get their second turn.

"What? Me Political(?)" features four members of Stringband, Martyn Joseph, and Ruthie Foster with Cyd Cassone. Martyn's "The Great American Novel", an angry 60s style song, gets very good applause. Ruthie sings "Woke Up This Morning (with my mind stayed on freedom)", a civil rights adaptation of a spiritual, to good applause. Martyn sings his "Arizona Dreams", also to good applause. The song is interrupted by some low-frequency audio feedback and Martyn smoothly slips into the song a reference to "better days when no feedback screams". When the song is over someone sitting near me says "that was hard-hitting." The members of Stringband then sing Bob Bossin's "Maple Leaf Dog", a rather lightweight apolitical contrast, to good applause. Martyn's "Please Sir", about Margaret Thatcher's government destroying the coal mines and coal valley towns in Wales, is greeted with applause from the first line, and gets very good applause at the end. Ruthie says from the stage "I admire what it takes to write songs like that."

"All from Africa" features Leon and Eric Bibb (with three backup musicians). The workshop title is a bit of a misnomer. Eric's interpretation of John Hurt's version of "Stagolee" is the first song to get very good applause. His interpretation of St. Louis Jimmy's "Going Down Slow" is similarly well received. When Leon sings Jerome Kern's "Old Man River" about 15% of the crowd give it a standing ovation. Their workshop finishes with Leon getting the audience to sing the words and do the actions for "Itsy Bitsy Spider" (which most people seem to know without prompting). An improvised jazz instrumental version of the song caps off the workshop, to very good applause.

"The Gals Have It!" features three members of Fruit, The Laura Love Duo, and The Wailin' Jennys. The workshop begins with Susie Keynes' "Dreaming" with the lyric "It's funny how our dreams and demons are often in the very same room", with some good co-operation from the other musicians. This is followed by a hard-driving blues / jazz version of Laura Love's "I Know", with everyone adding their contributions, including a break with bird calls that is lots of fun. There is very good applause for Sam Lohs' "All This Time", a heartbreak song with the lyrics "You disrespected my heart, bit by bit you blew me apart" and (sung one word at a time) "I guess I don't want all your lies". There are some lovely dual guitar picking, a flute break, and close harmony backup on the choruses. Other numbers in the workshop feature a Spanish style trumpet break, a Spanish style guitar break, and dance breaks. Unfortunately, in some of the numbers the words are unusually hard to follow, not sure why, though the sound has been rather poor at times on this workshop stage. The hottest cooking is between the members of Fruit and the Laura Love Duo, with the Wailin' Jennys not quite in their element. Due to a late start to the workshop, and a strictly enforced cut-off time, the Wailin' Jennys also get to do one less song than the others, which is a pity. Their frustration is apparent.

"From here to there and back again" features The Bill Hilly Band and Fruit. They have been together in workshops before, and they jam together with high energy on every number. This is what workshop collaboration is all about. Fruit leads the jams with Susie Keynes' sultry love song "The Gift". The Bills get good applause for the Trinidad and Tobago song "Are You Guilty?", as do Fruit for Mel Watson's "Jennifer Says" with the lyric "Give yourself some time, because time is all we have". Fruit then play Sam Lohs' "Turning to Blue", about "feeling fortunate when

others aren't," with the lyrics "Everything you see is turning to blue, unlucky for you" and "I've done all I can do, short of being you". Sam starts the audience off by having them stand and clap; then sing responses to rhythmic variations of "yeah, yeah, yeah"; then whistle; and finally even persuades them to do some pseudo-yodelling, something Laura Love hadn't managed to coax from them the previous evening. It's extremely high energy, and the crowd gives them extremely good applause. The workshop winds down with the final number, a gospel song "I Couldn't Keep It To Myself (What the Lord Has Done For Me)", from The Bill Hilly Band.

Sunday evening

On Sunday night the main stage opens with Les Bûcherons (Edmonton), most of which I miss except for the dramatic finale which includes the tossing of double-bitted axes on stage. Someone later tells me that they found the performance "a bit staid." Next up are The Wailin' Jennys (Winnipeg). Nicky Mehta's "Ten Mile Stilts", about a string of one-week love affairs, gets good applause. The Dave Olney song "Looking for the Water from the Deeper Well" receives very good applause. Their encore, "The Parting Glass", is done *a cappella* with excellent harmonies. An audience member later describes their singing as "sweet, clean, amazing sound, tight harmonies." Even on Monday people were still mentioning those harmonies.

Martyn Joseph (Cardiff, Wales) is next. The MC introduces him with "Some people want to get you to move your toes; some people want to move you; Martyn Joseph wants to move heaven and earth". It sounds great, though I learn later that he's paraphrasing a sentence from Martyn's web site. After his new song "Love Is", with the lyric "Love can't be extinguished by blindfolding the rose", a member of the audience near me says "I love his words". The next song is "Dic Penderyn", about a man unjustly hanged in Wales in the 1830s, which Martyn links to modern times with the lyric "Keep those workers in their place, keep those Welsh boys in their place". He follows this with "Thunder and Rainbows (from the same sky)". "This next song is a kind of an anthem for spiritual refugees" is Martyn's introduction to "(I am a) Liberal Backslider (and it sure is a lot of fun)", with lyrics like "I'm gonna take a TV evangelist and punch him in the face". To show that he is not just a man with a great line in angry verse, he sings "All This Time", about passing the age of 40, with the lyric "It's taken all this time to turn around and see, that the sum of all these parts are we".

The crowd gives this very good applause. Next is a song about a refugee, a man from Priština whose entire family has been killed, but which could be about any refugee. The song is titled "The Good in Me is Dead", from the heart-tearing line "Don't ask me what I dread, that the good in me is dead". The last song of his set is a repeat from his workshop set, "The Great American Novel" with the lyric "A man leaves his darkness when he follows the sun". The crowd loves it and gives Martyn about a 60% standing ovation. For his encore, he sings "Whoever It Was Who Brought Me Here Will Have to Take Me Home", of which he says "I think I've written my funeral song" and "if I don't write another song it won't matter." About a third of the audience give him another standing ovation.

As the sun is setting, seemingly huge and blood-red through the smoke-reinforced clouds in the west above the mountains, Ruthie Foster (College Station, USA) takes the stage with Cyd Cassone. She does a number of blues/gospel songs, including Terri Hendrix's "(I've got a) Hole in My Pocket (where it all slips away)", her own "Real Love", and Brownie McGhee's "Walk On" with the lyric "Keep on walking until you find your way" - for which about a third of the crowd give her a standing ovation. For her encore she sings *a cappella* Son House's song "Don't You Mind People Grinning in Your Face" with the memorable lyric "Bear this in mind, good friends is hard to find". The next group up is Fruit (Adelaide, Australia). For some reason their evening performance is flat compared to their afternoon workshop. The volume on their instruments is cranked way up and consequently some of their words are hard to distinguish. They don't seem as relaxed, and there doesn't seem to be the same electricity from the audience. One highlight is Mel Watson's song about love, "Momma Momma", with the lyric "Momma, you never told me it was going to be this good". During the last song of the set, Susie Keynes' "Don't Try Putting Me In Places (I Don't Want To Go)" Susie invites Ruthie Foster up to the stage for some vocal response work, skat singing, and some audience participation, but Ruthie seems a bit uncomfortable and at one point asks "Is this a sing-off?" A few people give a standing ovation. The encore, repeated from the afternoon workshop, is Sam Lohs' "Turning to Blue", which gets very good applause and finishes the act on a better note.

Next up are Willie and Lobo (Sarasota, USA and La Cruz de Huanacastle, Mexico). I am talking to a friend I haven't seen for years, so miss much of the excitement of the incredible fiddling - when their set ends about one third of the audience gives them a

standing ovation. Rounding off the Sunday evening show is Lennie Gallant (Halifax). His set receives good but polite applause, a number of people are drifting off home early, and when he finishes about one quarter of the audience give him a standing ovation. The MC announces that this evening is the first sell-out crowd in the festival's 26 years.

Monday workshops

I get to 5 of today's 16 workshops. "En Français" features Lennie Gallant, Marie-Lynn Hammond, and La Volée d'Castors. The session receives very good applause overall, especially for two song-and-instrumental combinations performed by La Volée d'Castors ("La tour" and "La jolie Rochelle", both songs about meeting three pretty maidens and choosing the youngest); and for Lennie Gallant and Ronald Bourgeois's "Briser les murs", a song about the walls between the heart and one's desire. Marie-Lynn Hammond does a song based on a poem written by her mother, "Être libre", with a line that she translates evocatively as "to sail to a distant country not knowing one's own name or age".

"From Around the World" features Alpha Yaya Diallo and three members of Fruit. There is good energy between the two groups, and good applause throughout. In Fruit's new song "A Thousand Days" (I don't know who wrote it) Mel has an awesomely long Morse-code-like clarinet break that proves that she has excellent command of circular breathing. There is extremely good applause for a number by Alpha which includes a dance-off between Jenny, Alpha's dancer, and Sam from Fruit. The final number in the workshop by Fruit is "It's Time to See" (I don't know who wrote it) with the lyric "Today's the day when I pause a little bit longer", which gets very good applause. As one member of Fruit says of the workshop, "it's been an absolute buzz."

"Traditional Roots Music" features April Verch and the Duhks, to good applause. Their joint finale is an instrumental medley beginning with "St. Ann's Reel" and including step dancing by April, and it gets some very good applause. "Life Issues and Causes" features Bob Bossin, Marie-Lynn Hammond, Martyn Joseph, Mary Gauthier, and Lennie Gallant, and is very good. Mary Gauthier's "Have a Little Mercy" (I don't know who wrote it) gets very good applause, and the final number, Martyn Joseph's "This Is Us (we, you and me together, we are home)" gets extremely good applause and a general standing ovation, unusual for a workshop session. "Special Concert" is technically a workshop with Stringband (Canada), but in reality it is the

beginning of the evening program. They get generally good applause, with a few people giving them a standing ovation at the end of their set.

Monday evening

I regret missing most of Mary Gauthier's set (Boston, USA) while talking with friends, but I do note that perhaps 70% of the crowd gave her a standing ovation at the end of her set. Later I'm told that her CDs sold very well, and some friends tell me "stunning songwriter", "raw honesty", "very inclusive despite being about intimate details of her own life", "clear and clean sound, could hear every word", "a very pleasant surprise", "she's just nailed the story, one couldn't say it more simply and directly", "of the Guthrie and Dylan ilk." La Volée d'Castors (Lanaudière) are next, to generally good applause. A medley entitled "The Mother-in-Law" gets very good applause. An *a cappella* song whose title I miss has the audience singing along with the nonsense choruses, and also gets very good applause, as does the following instrumental, with step dancing.

Once again the mountains, the clouds, and the smoke lend magical moments to the sunset. There are wonderful diagonal beams of light coming over Mount Rundle, strong in the haze, and in the distance one beam makes the Canadian flag flying over the Canmore Nordic Centre stand out brightly against the dark green mountain slopes. The next set is April Verch (Saskatoon), champion fiddler and step dancer, with about a 30% standing ovation at the end. Alpha Yaya Diallo (Vancouver), a high energy band with an African heritage and their own dancer, receive about a 20% standing ovation. Tom Russell (El Paso, USA) is next. His song "Modern Art" with the lyric "There's two damned things that'll break your heart, modern love and modern art" gets very good applause. His final song is "Haley's Comet", about Bill Haley, a song which reminds one of "American Pie" with the lyric "The jukebox was busted at the bus depot when Haley's comet hit the ground". There is about a 50% standing ovation, followed by extremely good applause for his encore medley beginning with the traditional "Carrickfergus" and finishing with his and Andrew Hardin's "The Road It Gives, the Road It Takes Away".

The final performers at this year's festival are The Bill Hilly Band (Victoria), the surprise hit of last year's festival. Their opening medley receives very good applause. Two songs later they play a Greek-style instrumental medley ("Sicilian Tarantella / Berlin Busker's Polka") during which the entire band take

their wireless instruments down to join the dancers in the dancing area to the side of the stage, again to very good applause. There's a similar warm reception for another song, one whose title I miss, with the lyric "I'd trade every sunset for a hand to cradle my head". André Victor Correia's "André de Sapato Novo" also gets good applause, as does their next number during which they are joined by the step dancer from La Volée d'Castors. Their next medley includes an instrumental, the bluegrass song "My Walking Shoes Don't Fit Me Anymore", and the gospel song (repeated from a workshop) "I Couldn't Keep It To Myself". It has the audience standing and joining in. Their encore, to thunderous applause, is a medley that begins with the band's own "Covered Front Porch".

As an unexpected treat before the finale we hear the Arrogant Worms with "We're Not American", to thunderous applause. Then with as many performers as fit on the stage, and with the audience standing, swaying, and singing along, the two final songs, "Mary Ellen Carter" and "Four Strong Winds", finish this year's Canmore Folk Festival.

An Interview with Martyn Joseph

Martyn Joseph, one of the top acts at the festival, is a man whose music and life are intertwined. "What you do afterwards, meeting and interacting with members of the audience, should be an extension of what you do on stage. It's nice to know you've connected with people. The live moment is the biggest connection. Recorded music is so final. The live thing breathes in a whole different direction. Because I have a voice and audience, you [sic] can have influence. I ask: did I connect, did the spirit move, is the world a slightly better place for what I did? It is the passion, it is the empathy within the music that makes it stand out. I feel like I'm up there bleeding. I'm trying to articulate what they're trying to say. The day I can't see myself out there [in the crowd] is the day I stop."

Among the artists who have influenced him, Martyn lists Bruce Springsteen ("especially because of his connection with his audience"), Led Zeppelin, U2, Paul Simon, and Woody Guthrie. Formerly "one of Britain's foremost Christian musicians", Martyn is still a Christian, though he takes great care to distance himself from organised churches. "Mainstream Christianity is not what I am or what I believe. I didn't reject faith, I rejected some of the theology of the mainstream church. To be involved in justice issues and social issues is to show my faith. My music is underpinned by a faith as such. My music attracts

spiritual refugees who still believe but can't hack what they see in the mainstream Christianity. The questions are just as important as the answers." His feelings about the mainstream come across with crystal clarity in his song "Liberal Backslider".

He works with, and does charity performances and CDs for, the charity Christian Aid and for the Brazilian organisation for landless workers, Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST). He feels that Brazil today, with its new socialist government under President Lula (Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva), is the most hopeful nexus for change in the world. "He seems to be not selling out his socialism. Though they may try to kill him." Of the MST, he says "There is a coming together of the people, they are finally getting some of the land. They're non-violent and I think they're winning through. The poor are rising up. I trust them. I don't think it's going to be a bloody revolt. I've seen their courage and their passion for justice."

Of the Western world he says, "In the years to come history will absolutely slaughter the West for the things we've done to those nations. No one will be in any doubt about what we did to people. I'm glad we'll get judged that way. In the meantime we'll keep fighting for the general good. With justice comes peace, and we're fighting for peace." Of his own community he says "I'm still great friends with some of the people I went to school with in Cardiff. My music can make even the right wing golfers [with whom he golfs] think a bit. Even they would acknowledge that they have been visibly moved at concerts. It is great to have friends in so many different communities."

Of the Canmore Folk Festival he says "I'm in awe of the Rockies. It's opened up a brand new chapter in my life that I treasure very deeply. Last night was one of the top five concerts of my life. I feel a huge responsibility during those moments. I'm not just a guitar player as such. The weight of that can be quite emotionally draining. It's incredible when the audience gives you that moment. It's a very humbling thing. Artists sometimes wonder if what they're doing is worthwhile, and Canada has done that for me [given me that rejuvenation]."

James Prescott

CD Reviews

To answer a point raised by a couple of reviewers below, I don't always have time to listen to CDs before I send them to reviewers, nor do I make a judgment as to the percentage of "traditional" music content. This magazine (sometimes controversially) includes the word "folk" in its title and

mandate, despite the use of the word "traditional" in the parent organization's name, and I tend to interpret the term "folk" broadly, as do the people who put recordings into the "Folk" section in record stores. Some of the items reviewed thus may have less "traditional" folk music content than others, although they almost all have Canadian "folk" content or connections.

John Leeder, *Reviews Editor*

Jon Bartlett & Rika Ruebsaat. *Our Singing Tradition, Volume 1: Come to Me in Canada*. CFW03.

—*Our Singing Tradition, Volume 2: The Young Man From Canada*. CFW02. 342 East 8th Ave., New Westminster, B.C. V3L 4K8 (no postal address on packaging); <jon_bartlett@telus.net>; <www3.telus.net/jonbartlett-rikaruebsaat/index.html>

These two recordings are a must-have item for anyone building a library of Canadian traditional folksong. John Bartlett and Rika Ruebsaat are teachers, musicians and researchers who have been working at their craft for over 30 years and whose names will be familiar to readers of *Canadian Folk Music*. These two collections of mostly traditional Canadian folksongs are part of the *Our Singing Tradition* series, and were originally recorded in 1979. Like most traditional music, these songs hold up very well to the scrutiny of the years. Simple arrangements (including an occasional piano, which is an instrument not often heard these days as an accompaniment to folksong singing) leave the songs to speak for themselves, and speak they do, through the lovely, strong and evocative voices of these two singers.

Come to Me In Canada includes both traditional and more contemporary songs. The Child ballad "Willie Drowned in Ero" appears shortly after Wade Hemsworth's "Log Diver's Waltz", and Peggy Seeger's haunting "Springhill Mine Disaster" follows "The Kangaroo", a ballad that morphed from the ancient "Carrion Crow". Overall the performances are delightful, my favourite being the energetic, tongue-twisting "Dondaine la ridaine", which was recorded in front of a live audience. This is a wonderful recording, its only failing being that it's over too soon.

The Young Man From Canada: B.C. Songs from the P.J. Thomas Collection features some of the songs collected by British Columbia folklorist P.J. Thomas. Thomas's work was somewhat controversial, in that, instead of the Child ballads and lovesongs so prevalent in the folksong collections of the east, he found songs that represented the real-life experiences of B.C.'s earliest European inhabitants: hymns, Tin Pan Alley tunes, logging and mining and railway songs. Once

again the arrangements are tasteful and unassuming, and the songs themselves ring out. This is a marvelous collection, and happily there is a volume 3 coming.

Jean Mills, *Guelph, Ontario*

Bill Lamey. *Full Circle: From Cape Breton to Boston and Back -- Classic House Sessions of Traditional Cape Breton Music 1956-1977*. 82161-7032-2 (CD, 38-page booklet). Rounder Records, 1 Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140, USA; <info@rounder.com>; <www.rounder.com>

Bill Lamey (1914-91) began playing the fiddle in Cape Breton, continuing to play and promote the music during his 30-plus years in the Boston area and his later retirement back in Cape Breton. He kept a busy schedule playing for square dances, parish picnics and house parties in both Cape Breton and Boston, recording 78s for the Celtic and Apex labels, and hosting a weekly radio show on CJCB in Sydney and later at WVOM in Boston. He was a founding member of the Cape Breton Island Gaelic Foundation in 1938, and later served as the Boston branch president from 1965 to 1980. A 1983 testimonial dinner to celebrate Bill's contribution to Cape Breton music and culture in Boston was attended by over 500 people, including many friends and musicians from Cape Breton.

The first five tracks of this CD were originally recorded in 1956 at a private house session in Massachusetts, by Bill's friend and amateur recorder, Doug MacMaster. This homemade tape apparently became a classic, and was much traded amongst Cape Breton musicians at the time. The warm, intimate atmosphere created by Bill, piano accompanist Mary Jessie MacDonald, and their audience of three (Doug, his wife and Bill's wife) draws the listener into the room. I could picture myself sitting in a corner, unobtrusively watching and listening. When one of the women exclaims, "Oh god, that's good!" at the end of track 3, I want to agree.

The first track is an unusual medley of a waltz, a strathspey and two reels. We learn from the liner notes that this "waltz" was written by the prolific Scottish fiddle composer Neil Gow in 6/8, and may not have been played originally as a waltz. Bill's full sound, reminiscent of the bagpipe's drone, and the considerable crossover with piping repertoire, carefully researched by Kate Dunlay, attest to the strong connection between Cape Breton, or Scottish-Canadian, as it would have been known then (Doherty 1994), fiddling and piping in the early and mid-20th century. Ireland's lesser-known contribution to the

Cape Breton repertoire is also evident from Dunlay's notes regarding tune origins, collections and titles. That Bill liked to sit at the bass end of the piano can be heard in the balance between the fiddle and the two ends of the piano. The ringing bass notes produce quite a distinctive sound. Mary Jessie's right hand doubling on "The Mourne Mountains" is particularly impressive.

Tracks 6 to 9 were recorded at a house party near Boston, also in 1956. It is easy to tell that this is a larger gathering of people, and their enjoyment of the music is audible: feet tapping, hoots and hollers, and perhaps even some dancing on track 9. Again on track 6 we have an example of a tune crossing genres: "Farewell to the Tay", originally a pipe march, is played here as a fiddle jig. One of my favourites is the last jig of track 7, "Oh Dear What Can the Matter Be?", which strikes me as a good tune for young fiddle students.

Tracks 10 to 15 also quickly became a classic amateur recording, made by Herbie MacLeod in 1963 at Bill's home in Massachusetts to share with Scottish fiddlers on a trip to Aberdeen. According to an excerpt from an interview with MacLeod included in the liner notes, the Scottish fiddlers were amazed to discover Cape Breton fiddling upon hearing this recording of Lamey (and also one of Winston "Scotty" Fitzgerald). Bill later traveled to Scotland himself, where his live performances were received enthusiastically. The long, long sets from this recording (5:12 to 6:41) demonstrate Bill's mastery of building tension and energy throughout the marches and strathspeys and culminating in the reels. Track 12 is particularly impressive, as Bill actually pulls back the tempo for the last strathspey of the set, "Devil in the Kitchen", and then starts to build again into the two reels.

Track 16, recorded in 1977, is the only evidence we have of Bill Lamey as a composer. The "Rev. John Rankin of Glendale" march, written for a good friend, is followed by the voice of Rev. John Angus Rankin, introducing Bill and other fiddlers at the opening of the Glendale Hall in 1962. This recording is more muffled than the rest, which is interesting, since it is the latest of the recording sessions included on the CD and was again made by Herbie MacLeod, who is acknowledged as a prolific amateur recorder of Cape Breton fiddling.

The last track comes from "one of the most popular Cape Breton 78 rpm disks", recorded at CJC studios in Sydney in 1947 for the Celtic label. Featuring Joe MacLean and Bill Lamey on fiddles and Lila Hashem on piano, this recording also includes drums. Although (thankfully) not very loud in the mix, the snare is

somewhat piercing and seems totally out of place. I wonder if the drums were part of the dominant Cape Breton fiddle aesthetic of the time, or if it was "required" by record companies to give the fiddle music a more popular appeal. I find this track disappointing also because it lacks the excitement and tension that Bill builds into his medleys on the other tracks. As Paul MacDonald explains in the notes, the average length of a 78 was only about 3 1/2 minutes, which may have been sufficient for popular songs of the day, but not for the long strings of Cape Breton fiddle medleys. The musicians are hardly able to get going in this strathspey and reel before their time is up. It seems to me a disappointing end to an otherwise exciting CD.

Beyond the musical considerations, this recording is important for its historical documentation of Cape Breton fiddling in the mid-20th century. Like the 78s, even my LPs of Cape Breton fiddling of this time period feature separate cuts of disparate tunes, not the long medleys that were/are commonly played at house parties and dances. I would think then that this recording is one of the few commercially available that demonstrates the musical aesthetics of the musicians themselves in this time period: the putting together of sets, accompaniment, balance of instruments. It also documents a variety of house session settings, including various means of audience participation.

The well-researched notes that accompany this recording contribute to its documentary importance. Co-producer Paul MacDonald provides a brief history of the recording of Cape Breton fiddlers from the beginning of the 20th century, including excerpts from Allistair MacGillivray's *The Cape Breton Fiddler* (Sydney, NS: College of Cape Breton Press, 1981) and various interviews with fiddlers and amateur recorders. Bill's daughter Patricia writes his biography, recording the family history as far back as 1834 in Scotland and 1800 in Ireland. Cape Breton fiddle scholar Kate Dunlay describes Bill's style, noting his strong attack and drive, and also the rhythmic freedom with which he plays his airs; she likens it to old-style Gaelic singing, rare among today's fiddlers. Her notes for each tune include such details as the composer, alternate titles, collections in which it is found, other prominent versions, early recordings and atypical keys. Biographical notes and style descriptions of the two predominant piano accompanists on the recording, Mary Jessie MacDonald and Eddie Irwin, are also included. One of the most heart-warming sections of the booklet has tributes to Bill Lamey from well-known Cape Breton, Scottish and Irish musicians such

as Natalie MacMaster, Jerry Holland, John Allen Cameron, Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh (Altan) and Alisdair Fraser.

I am not normally one to romanticize old recordings. As a product of the Ontario fiddle competition scene, I appreciate clean, clear fiddling; however, I am wooed by Bill Lamey's sound: the full tone and incredible drive. I can't help but tap my toes, probably the highest commendation of all for a fiddle recording. For more information on Cape Breton fiddling, see Elizabeth Anne Doherty, *The Paradox of the Periphery: Evolution of the Cape Breton Fiddle Tradition 1928-1995* (Ph.D. diss., University College of Cape Breton, 1996).

Sherry Johnson, Toronto, Ontario

Arnie Naiman, Chris Coole, Chris Quinn & Brian Taheny. *The Banjo Special*. M03BS. Merriweather Records Ltd., 109 Crawford Rose Dr., Aurora, Ont. L4G 4S1; <arnie@merriweather.ca>; <www.merriweather.ca>

CFM readers may recall glowing reviews of previous clawhammer recordings from Chris Coole and Arnie Naiman, written by our resident banjo expert, John Leeder — reviews which were even happier because they registered some degree of surprise that clawhammer playing of this depth was occurring in Canada. [To set the record straight, I reviewed only the first CD in the series, *5 Strings Attached with No Backing* (34.2, p. 62); *5 Strings Attached, vol. 2* was reviewed by Don Deines (35.1, p. 19). --JL]. The current issue puts that depth into a broader perspective, with bluegrass banjo (Chris Quinn) and Irish tenor (Brian Taheny) also represented. In reality, three different instruments are on tap here: for starters, the Irish banjo has four strings and a relatively short neck. Furthermore, clawhammer players favor an openbacked model, often tuned a bit lower than the bluegrass banjo, which typically has a tighter head and a resonator and is played with finger- and thumbpicks, all of which make for the characteristic bright bluegrass sound.

That's the sound which, I suspect, most people imagine when the word "banjo" comes up. Prior to the mid-60s, it was the sound of the tenor banjo, but not the Irish tenor. (This does get complicated, no?) Rather, the tenor of early jazz and late pizza parlor was tuned CGDA, and the Irish tenor is usually tuned lower, to an octave below a fiddle or mandolin. (Actually, Taheny seems to favor a guitar-like tuning, EADG.) So the other tenor had a brighter sound, too,

and it shouldn't be surprising that public awareness flipped easily to the bluegrass sound. Jazz tenor players tended to a chord-based technique (though this was not universal), and Irish players base their technique on the sounds of fiddling and piping.

In fact, the jazz-based tenor style was extremely prevalent in Canada until rather recently, particularly at what I will quaintly call the folk level. If I have any criticism of this CD, it's that this style is not represented. However, I won't call this a criticism, but an observation. For one thing, with 17 solid cuts by four players (usually playing solo or with appropriate backup -- the supporting ensemble for Irish banjo will not work for bluegrass!), the album is quite full already. Any more would necessarily mean that someone would not get represented. So, best to think of this as a representation of Canadian banjo styles which will be known to revivalists and their audiences, and enjoy it for that. Yet it's a sad thing that the wealth of indigenous, pre-revival Canadian banjo styles will probably never be anthologized. It would be interesting to hear side by side players from Alberta, Ontario and the Maritimes, ranging from the very professional Maurice Beaulieu to African-Canadian amateurs and semi-pros. However, it's a small country, and the market for non-mass tastes is tiny.

Anyway, this is a very enjoyable disc. My personal preference runs to clawhammer style, which predominates here. Tenor aficionados might balk that their ax gets half the number of solos, and there are only three cuts in strictly bluegrass style. There is a nifty duet between Coole and Quinn, on John Hartford's "Steam Powered Aereo Plane", which I must confess surprised me. I'd put the disc on and gone about my business, and as the tune wormed its way into my consciousness, my first reaction was, "Oh, that sounds like...". I was surprised, in part, because I'd never have thought of the tune as being much on its own, but in fact it does have a whimsy, even without the charming, silly lyrics.

The only vocal here is from Coole on the venerable "Little Birdie". I haven't done a count, but it appears to me that the disc is pretty evenly balanced among traditional pieces (not always old warhorses, either) and tunes written by the players. Even the warhorses are generally given personalized (but not obnoxiously revisionist) readings. I particularly enjoyed Coole's deep and comfortably-paced "Year of Jubilo". Both Taheny and Quinn present their virtuosity without braggadocio. Both traditions can end up sounding rather like sewing machines if the players are only very competent. These men never forget that they're

playing music, not banjos. And whoever thought up opening the record with Naiman's laid-back whistling and picking on "I'm On My Way To Somewhere" deserves a prize.

This might be a better record for clawhammer lovers who are open to a little Irish and bluegrass music than for specialists in either of the latter. That may not be good for sales — as I indicated, old-time banjo really does not have a wide recognition — but I'm glad to have *The Banjo Special* on my rack.

George Lyon, Calgary, Alberta

Various. *Còmhla Cruinn -- Gathered Together: A Cape Breton Gaelic Celebration*. Commun Féis an Eilein, P.O. Box 317, Christmas Island, N.S. B1T 1R7; <feisaneilein@ns.sympatico.ca>; <www.feisaneilein.ca>

While taking a Gaelic song course in Scotland last year, I chose to learn a song, known only by its vocables as "Air Fàillirinn Iù", from the CD *Còmhla Cruinn*. When I first sang it for Wilma Kennedy, a well-known Gaelic singer, she became very excited. Although she had been collecting and singing Gaelic songs for most of her life, she had never heard this one. That's when I realised just how important this CD is.

Seventeen singers are featured on this field-like recording, varying in age (from young Colin Watson, in his early 20s, to elder tradition-bearers), gender and Gaelic ability (including new learners, fluent learners and native speakers). *Còmhla Cruinn* creates the sense of both a traditional milling frolic and a ceilidh. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, milling frolics were house events at which neighbours pounded woven wool so as to shrink it, thereby making it warmer and more waterproof. Gaelic songs were sung to accompany the beat. Each participant took a turn choosing a song and singing the verses, while everyone would join in on the choruses. Although there is no longer a pragmatic need to mill wool, milling frolics continue to be held regularly in Cape Breton for social purposes. A "milling blanket" is still used, and the dull thump of the wool can be heard on most tracks, keeping time to the songs. Several pictures are also provided in the liner notes.

Interspersed amongst the milling songs are several ceilidh songs not featuring the shared choruses or the thumping wool. "Ceilidh" means "visit" (although it has also come to mean "party" or "dance" in contemporary usage) and involves an informal and often impromptu visit to someone's house, resulting in

songs, stories, dancing, the sharing of news, and music. Instrumental tracks by a few musicians who have been considerably influenced by the Gaelic language are heard on the CD as well, including Joe Peter MacLean, a native-Gaelic speaking fiddler, and Paul MacNeil, a piper whose father, Rod C. MacNeil, and uncle, Jamie MacNeil, are both featured singers on this CD.

This is such a great CD, for so many reasons. First, it features such a range of singers, which illustrates the vitality of this culture. Second, it features both learners and native speakers, demonstrating how Cape Bretoners are responding to the declining number of native Gaelic speakers (estimates are less than 500) by taking up the language and culture as adults. Third, the liner notes make it clear that songs have been transmitted in a variety of ways, from the traditional method of oral transmission between native speakers at a ceilidh, to the use of amateur recordings of community singers and professional recordings produced in Scotland. This again reflects the reality of the Gaelic situation in Cape Breton today. Fourth, the range of repertoire includes both songs from Scotland that were brought by Scottish immigrants to Cape Breton in the 19th century and passed down through the generations, and songs composed by Cape Breton bards. Fifth, the songs are sung as they would be in a traditional setting. That is to say, there are no "arrangements", no added instruments and no electronic manipulation (except for a bit of atmospheric reverb on the flute playing by Kim Ells).

I admit that I laughed out loud when I heard "Òran do Sheann Ford" ("Song to an Old Ford") because the chorus singers cannot seem to decide on a key, resulting in a bit of cacophony. And yet this is part of the charm of the culture and of this CD. Cape Breton Gaelic singers are prized for their knowledge of their songs and for their desire to participate, more than for so-called "beautiful" voices. The chorus on this track illustrates that the point is to join in, regardless of whether one knows the chorus thoroughly or whether the key is in a suitable range. This "cacophony" is a common and acceptable part of milling frolics.

I also love the substantial liner notes. Hector MacNeil, a fluent Gaelic learner and professor of Gaelic at UCCB, provides information about immigration patterns to Cape Breton in the 19th century, the history of Gaelic on the island, the oral tradition and the milling frolic. My one complaint, however, is that, while a list of sources is provided at the end of the notes, references are not cited within them. I would like to know, for example, where the reference to 85,000 Cape Breton Gaelic-speakers in 1880 came

from; in my own research, I have found that most references to the Gaelic-speaking population are based on (educated) guesses, and differ significantly.

After this detailed background information, each singer is profiled. Patronymics are provided along with each singer's source for his/her song (important in Gaelic culture, which privileges an understanding of one's personal genealogy as well as that of a song). The Gaelic lyrics are transcribed and a website address is provided for the English translations.

This CD is a wonderful aural "snapshot" of the Gaelic singing community in central Cape Breton in 2002. As such, it will surely be used by future generations of Cape Bretoners to recall their history and heritage. It is also excellent for Gaelic learners, since one can read the lyrics and hear how traditional singers pronounce them. Finally, it is a wonderful introduction to the vibrant Gaelic culture of Cape Breton for those who may never have known that it existed.

Heather Sparling, Mississauga, Ontario

Myllie Barron. *Fiddler on the Loose*. VRCD 331. Voyager Recordings & Publications, 424 35th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122, USA; <info@voyagerrecords.com>; <www.voyagerrecords.com>

Recorded in 1982, when Barron was 72, *Fiddler on the Loose* showcases Barron's enduring love of fiddle music. Barron grew up in the Swan River Valley district of Manitoba, listening to his father play fiddle for weddings, parties and schoolhouse dances. Barron's father also repaired fiddles, and when he finished fixing one, he would play a few tunes. "I thought it was the most beautiful, sweetest sound I ever heard," says Barron in the liner notes.

Barron started playing fiddle around the age of 9. When he was 16, he sent for a set of 48 lessons from the Slingerland School of Music in Chicago, which included a violin. Being from a family of ten, Barron confessed that his late night practising nearly drove his folks crazy. His parents often remarked that "he should stop that nonsense and go to bed". He did not listen to their comments, however, and in 1928 bought a fiddle from the T. Eaton Company in Winnipeg for \$75. A decade later, from 1938 to 1939, Barron and his brothers had a weekly radio show in Flin Flon, Manitoba. Barron's son Ray, then aged 4, was the vocalist. Barron entered his first fiddle contest at age 39. His late emergence on the scene was no handicap; by the time he was 40, Barron was the Manitoba Fiddle

Champion. Barron gave up fiddling for 16 years to work in construction, but quickly got back in the swing of things when he moved to 70 Mile House in B.C. in 1977. In 1982, Barron was the Grand National Senior Champion at the National Oldtime Fiddlers Contest in Weiser, Idaho.

Fiddler on the Loose features a solid selection of traditional tunes as well as two of Barron's original compositions. The majority of the tunes are jigs, reels and hornpipes, performed at a quick tempo, using short, separate bow strokes. Barron has wonderful tone and nice vibrato, which is especially apparent in the Italian waltz, appropriately called "Vals Italiano"! Barron is accompanied by Vivian Williams on piano and Phil Williams on bass. Both artists provide straightforward, rhythmic playing, complementary to Barron's style. Unfortunately, Barron's pitch is sometimes off; the tuning discrepancies are especially noticeable between the piano and the fiddle at the end of pieces.

Fiddler on the Loose features no-frills fiddling. It is an album full of good tunes that captures the history and spirit of old time music in Western Canada.

Keitha Clark, Shellbrook, Saskatchewan

Julie Kerr. *Mornings Like These*. SR20402. 939 4A St. NW, Calgary, Alta. T2N 1P8 (no postal address on packaging); <juliekerr@hotmail.com>; <www.juliekerr.com>

Mornings Like These will definitely appeal to the acoustic soul of many listeners. On this recording, singer/songwriter Julie Kerr sings 12 of her original songs, and her clear voice is the perfect instrument to deliver them. Julie is accompanied by a superb group of musicians that includes her husband (banjo, dobro), guitar player Craig Korth, mandolin player John Reischman, guitarist Jim Nunally and upright bass player Trisha Gagnon.

The strength of this collection of songs is the fact that each song is unique in character relative to its vocal presentation, lyrics, melody, and instrumental arrangement. It is often difficult to find a group of competent instrumentalists who will work together to enhance a variety of well-delivered vocals and sensitive lyrics without conflict, but producers Craig Korth and Jim Nunally have managed to do this successfully.

The title song, "Mornings Like These", blends a beautiful folk melody, reminiscent of the '60s, with

upbeat lyrics, fingerpicked acoustic guitars, tasteful mandolin riffs, a strong bass line and pleasant harmony vocals. On the other hand, "Everybody" is a bluegrass-flavoured song about the need that everyone has for love. The strong vocal is part of an arrangement that features banjo, fiddle and mandolin leads, and a unique fiddle/banjo instrumental tag composed by Craig Korth. Other songs with a definite bluegrass feel are "The Genie", "One Fine Day", "Back Porch Stairs" and "Where Have My Dreams Gone?". Each song discusses the simple but essential feelings of life that all of us will recognize. The lyrics are intelligent and nicely complement the unique individual melodies.

"The Raven" is a folk song about life and perceptions of life that Julie wrote when she looked out her window one day and saw a black raven. "Hey Now Momma" reflects the need to take time and enjoy the moments of life. Julie blends her clear voice with the accordion of Ronnie Dyke and fiddle of Byron Mhyre to produce an arrangement that has a definite Cajun feel to it. "Say Goodbye" addresses our mortality in a sensitive, but optimistic manner. This arrangement nicely blends a sensitive vocal and lyrics with tasteful mandolin leads to produce a song and a feeling that provide the opportunity to take time to reflect on life and our final destination. "Fade To Grey", a song written about her husband, "The Fifth Horse", which evolved from a poem, and "Diamond Joe", which was inspired by her attendance at a Diamond Joe White concert in Calgary, are all folk songs that have been carefully composed by Julie, and each is recorded with its own relevant instrumental background.

This CD comes with an attractively designed booklet that devotes a page to each song, providing the lyrics, the personal thoughts that inspired the song and a list of the musicians who played on it. Overall, this is a package of well-written Canadian songs. The combination of folk- and bluegrass-influenced material contains the everyday thoughts and stories that have characterized traditional music for the past century in Canada. This collection is also appealing in the fact that it provides the listener with clear vocals and tasteful instrumentals intertwined in beautifully complex arrangements. There is not one weak song on this CD, which needs to be listened to and appreciated.

Allan Kirby, Cobourg, Ontario

Rodney Brown. *Into the Woods*. SSDK005. Starsilk Records, 347 Pearl St., Thunder Bay, Ont. P7B 1E9; <brown@norlink.net>; <www.rodneymbrown.ca>

This collection of original songs by Thunder Bay singer-songwriter Rodney Brown ranges through a variety of musical styles, including country-flavoured rock and folk, slow ballads and even a taste of reggae. The playing is consistently strong, especially some beautiful guitar work by Brown himself, and the lush arrangements bring out the character of each song. Brown seems able to change the quality of his voice to adapt to whatever the mood of each song requires -- his Sting-like rendition of the reggae piece "The Only One" is quite impressive! The album is produced by Ian Tamblyn, who also plays a variety of instruments, along with a chorus of excellent backup musicians which includes James Stephens, Fred Guignon and Ken Kanwisher, among others. The collection of musical instruments helps explain why the album sounds so full -- guitar (acoustic, classical, electric, slide and bass), mandolin, fiddle, organ, piano, synth, trumpet and a whole lot more. The mix is eclectic and rich.

Jean Mills, Guelph, Ontario

Bill Usher. *Slowdancing in the Ballroom of Life*. Bill Usher, 2121 Blaeberry Rd., RR#1, S8 C24, Golden, B.C. V0A 1H0; 1-866-344-4998; <bill@billusher.com>; <www.billusher.com>

Singer-songwriter Bill Usher sounds as if he's stepped right out of the '60s -- and brought a bluesy, gently rocking groove along with him. He's also lined up a top-drawer cast of musicians to help him out, among them Willie P. Bennett, Dan Kershaw, Rebecca Campbell, Suzie Vinnick, Kristin Briggs, Jian Ghomeshi and Phil Dwyer, to name a few. The sound is gentle rock (odd to be reviewing this album for *Canadian Folk Music!*) with a touch of blues, jazz and gospel thrown in for good measure. It's a mellow, sometimes haunting collection of songs. Beautifully arranged and recorded, *Slowdancing in the Ballroom of Life* is an unusual, hard-to-classify recording that will stick with you long after the CD is over.

Jean Mills, Guelph, Ontario

Celtae. *No Regrets*. Celtae, 1904 - 199 Kent St., Ottawa, Ont. K2P 2K8 (no postal address on packaging); <nathan@cetae.ca>; <www.cetae.ca>

Blame the Pogues. Although it's many years since they inspired a new generation to take up an in-your-face fusion of Celtic and punk, it seems like every Canadian city these days boasts at least a couple of high-energy Celtic rock bands. Ottawa-based Celtae are a cut above most in the genre. Describing themselves as "Ferocious

Celtic Sounds from the East Coast", these three lads and one lass pound out a solid repertoire of Maritime and Irish tunes and songs. They include some original songs, primarily with nautical themes. They also have some fun with an entertaining fiddle and spoken work piece called "Killer Cod".

Most of the material is delivered at full throttle, but they resist the urge to hurl in too much. The powerful shanty "Merchant Marine", written and led by Nathan MacDonald, has the three lads belting out the words, but losing none of the power by being accompanied by a solo bodhran. And they close the CD with a beautiful P.E.I. fiddle air, "George Mel's Dream", played immaculately by Dana Arrowsmith. Actually, Celtae appear to have changed fiddle players part way through their recording project. Their former fiddle player, Jules Fisk, plays on six tracks, new fiddler Dana Arrowsmith on just three. They may have lost a fine fiddler, but they gained an excellent one -- Arrowsmith's playing has the energy and crispness of many East Coast players (actually, she's from Ontario), but also has great intonation, which many lack. One track is aptly titled "Dana Wears the Pants".

Although this is a well-produced CD, Celtae are probably a band best appreciated in their natural habitat. That's either an Irish theme bar where everyone clutches a pint of Guinness and sings along, or closing a summer festival when your butt has been wedged in a lawn chair all day and now you just want to be up dancing and having a good time to end the evening.

Nan Colledge, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Enter the Haggis. *Enter the Haggis -- Live!*
ETHCD402. 14 Harbour Court, Bayfield, Ont. N0M 1G0; <trevor@enterthehaggis.com>;
<www.enterthehaggis.com>; Festival Distribution Inc.,
1351 Grant St., Vancouver, B.C. V5L 2X7; 1-800-633-8282; <mailorder@festival.bc.ca>;
<www.festival.bc.ca>

Enter the Haggis are five energetic kilted young men who push the Celtic Rock idiom to an extreme. This live CD, their third album, was recorded while on tour in April 2002. I listened to *Enter the Haggis -- Live* with some of my family, and got some interesting comments. Thanks are due to Dave, Rosa and Karina Gregory for their invaluable input to this review.

Make no mistake, these lads rock. This is no doubt a common and well-received compliment from their fans, rollicking crowds in student pubs and at Highland

Games. But did John realize, when he sent me this CD unopened to review, that ETH does not sound particularly "traditional"? This is CSTM's magazine, after all. But never mind. ETH's material is traditional, and they treat it with a rough but affectionate love -- passionate, if not always faithful.

Bagpipes, pennywhistle (Craig Downie) and fiddle (Brian Buchanan) share the stage with the inevitable acoustic and electric guitars (Trevor Lewington), bass (Mark Abraham) and drums (James Campbell). The material on this CD is divided between approximately half purely instrumental and half with lyrics, most based, to various degrees of looseness, on traditional tunes and songs. Despite the band being all decked out in Scottish regalia, the traditional songs (with vocals) on this album are all of Irish origin. There are also two silly just-for-fun humorous songs composed by Downie. Lead vocals alternate between Buchanan, Downie and Lewington, with Abraham backing them up. The instrumentals include Scottish standards like "Scotland the Brave" and "Athol Highlanders", at a more frantic pace than you've likely ever heard them before, as well as several composite arrangements of various traditional fiddle or pipe tunes. The band members must burn several thousand calories each at every performance. Electric guitar is much in evidence, complete with "wa-wa" pedals.

A few technical notes and quibbles. Happily, the vocals on the songs are amplified and placed far enough forward not to be drowned out by the instruments, avoiding this common issue with live non-acoustic performances. Despite this, on "Lanigan's Ball" the words need to be enunciated a little more clearly to be intelligible at this rapid pace.

Downies' bagpipe and pennywhistle performances are the standouts in terms of musicianship. Unfortunately, the pipes do not get to deliver their full striking effect, as only bagpipes can, on this recording, as they sound like they are too far back in the mix. Since this was a live performance, one wonders if the recording was limited to the mix through the sound system or if multi-tracks were available for mixing and adjustment during production. If so, surely such extreme Scots enthusiasts as ETH are not afraid of letting us hear the pipes loud and clear!

A rendition of "Wild Mountain Thyme" features a lovely pennywhistle interlude. The song is delivered with feeling, at a gentler pace than most of ETH's performances. Those familiar with the traditional tune of this well-known song may be disturbed by this version; has the singer not quite captured the tune, or is

it a deliberate variation? Interesting note: I was informed by one of the experts in my family that, although thought to be traditional in origin by many, including ETH, "Wild Mountain Thyme" was actually confirmed by court case to have been written by Francis McPeake.

After listening to this album several times, my favourite track has grown to be ETH's spirited version of "Arthur McBride", an 18th-century song about two young men who are not taken in by the recruiting sergeant's glorification of a soldier's life, and let him know in no uncertain terms. Lewington has added a catchy chorus of his own composition that fits in beautifully:

Count me out of your fortune and fame;
I would rather be here than be slain;
This is where I'll die,
Lost in the moss of the {?}.

Overall, *ETH—Live* is a jolly romp, cheerful, upbeat, and fun -- guaranteed to get the crowd to its feet in short order at any music festival. The major criticism I heard was that they give the melodies and traditional style (especially with fiddle) short shrift. But if something is lost in the translation, they also have something to add, besides speed and electronics -- I hear evidence of attention and a playful imagination being applied to every phrase, adding flourishes and surprises to the well-loved tunes. There are no throwaway moments throughout the album; the energy changes but never flags. Worth listening to just to hear how "Star of the County Down" sounds as a rock song, and to find out whether they play bagpipes on Mars.

Fiona Gregory, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

Stringband. *The Indispensable, 1972-2002*. NICK 10 (two CDs, 52-page booklet). Bob Bossin, 2455 Islandsview, Gabriola Island, B.C. V0R 1X7; <bob@bossin.net>; <www.stringband.net>

This is a collection of the best studio and live performances from an icon of Canadian folk music. The package consists of 46 tracks split evenly on two CDs, highlighting the best of Stringband from their 1973 debut album, *Canadian Sunset*, to their 2001 reunion concert on CBC's Vinyl Café. Stringband's lineup of musicians centered on Bob Bossin and Marie-Lynn Hammond, but at various times the group featured such fine musicians as Jerry Lewycky, Ben Mink, Terry King, Nancy Ahern and many others (including studio appearances by Stan Rogers and Daniel Lanois). While some may dispute Stringband's musical influence, there is no doubt that their independent approach to recording and touring

revolutionized the Canadian music scene, setting the stage for subsequent musicians within many genres.

As noted, this is a two-CD set. Included along with the discs is a hefty 52-page booklet giving the listener an eight-page index of musical contents, players and personnel for the various recordings, credits, and thank-yous to the many friends and subscribers of Stringband (note: a band with subscribers!). The remainder of the booklet consists of numerous photos and an excellent and comprehensive essay on the 30-year history of Stringband. This essay, written by Vancouver Folk Music Festival co-founder Gary Cristall, gives a detailed account of the people, places, music and influence of Stringband. Cristall is in an excellent position to reflect on the band, having served as Stringband's agent in the early 1980s.

I must admit that prior to listening to this recording I had heard Stringband on only one occasion, that being a 2002 Vinyl Café broadcast received via low-fidelity shortwave radio. But even the technical limitations of shortwave failed to prevent an hour-long smile from covering my face; this CD only serves to continue the trend. The variety of songs is truly amazing, ranging from arrangements of traditional Québécois and Acadien tunes (sung in French) to such progressive numbers as "Did You Hear They Busted The Fiddle Player?" and "Show Us The Length". This album had me laughing with "Mail-Sortin' Man", cheering for "The Maple Leaf Dog", dancing with the many instrumentals (the closing "Munster Medley" is a fine example), and getting choked up in Hammond's haunting "Omaha". Kudos also to Richard Hess, who did a fantastic job with audio restoration, allowing the full flavour of Stringband to come through.

I was thrilled by the strengths of so many of the songs performed by Stringband, to the extent that this album has become a fixture in my CD player for several weeks. For those familiar with (and fond of) Stringband, *The Indispensable* is an exceedingly accurate title for this two-disc retrospective. For those less familiar, this album is a highly recommended look at a distinctly Canadian folk phenomenon.

Paul Guise, Topeka, Kansas

Robert Burton Hubele with Brad Steckel. *The Human Heart*. FOFFCD0401. Foff Records, Box 906, Cochrane, Alta. T4C 1A9; <rhubele@foff.com>; <www.foff.com>

I'm taking it for granted that everyone has heard something about Robert Burton Hubele. Maybe you

heard his music in a movie or on a television show. You might have heard him in one of the many hontytonks across western Canada. But have you heard his latest CD, *The Human Heart*? This is a live recording done in Cochrane, Alberta, with a very accomplished guitarist, Brad Steckel. Robert and Brad do quite well together on these 19 tracks (some are preamble).

Hubele has a sound of his own, sometimes folky, sometimes jazzy and other times bluesy. He is one of the best storytellers around, as one will hear when listening to this CD. He does not just intro his songs, he takes you along and brings you inside. Hubele is a working person's man. One can feel this in the way he presents himself in his music and how he talks to the audience. Hubele has a great voice and can bring a smile ear to ear and then can make you reach for the kleenex as he takes you through life's ups and downs. All the songs are written by Robert, who is a truly fine writer. I found this new CD to be leaning more to the blues, although a couple of numbers have a country swing to them.

The Human Heart is on Robert's own label. If you can't get out there to see him live, well, this is the next best thing. I can assure you an evening listening to Hubele is an evening well spent.

Terry St. James, Montreal, Quebec

The Wailin' Jennys. WJ001.
<info@cameltrainproductions.ca>;
<www.thewailinjennys.com> (no postal address on packaging or website)

This untitled or self-titled mini-CD runs less than 25 minutes, and that's the only bad thing I can say about it. Three great performers, three great writers, and one super sampler EP, but only six tracks. I was left wanting more. Cara Luft, Ruth Moody and Nicky Mehta were already out there getting a name for themselves. John Sharples (owner of Sled Dog Music in Winnipeg) got the three to make good on a casual promise to play together. To their surprise, that one show was sold out, and so was the second show. Performing their own material and doing songs that they enjoy playing, the little project turned into a sensation.

Each player contributes a song to this mini-CD, leaving three other songs by others that they do so well. I do enjoy the songs the three wrote, but also enjoy how they have blended their talents on other songs, songs like "Bring me Li'l Water, Silvy"(Huddie

Ledbetter/John Lomax). It is hard to believe that they have not been playing together for years. It all just seems to click and by the sound of it, that's what happened. So I hope this is just a taste of things to come.

Terry St. James, Montreal, Quebec

Cara Luft. *Tempting the Storm*. BCT002. Cara Luft, c/o Blue Case Tunes, P.O. Box 68045, RPO Osborne Village, Winnipeg, Man. R3L 2V9;
<caraluft@hotmail.com>; <www.caraluft.com>

The Luft name is no stranger to Canadian music. Daughter of Barry and Lyn, Cara is at home in the spotlight. She embraces it with deep lyrics and professional musicianship. Cara Luft has fused folk and rock influences so well that heads have turned. In 1998, Calgary's Lilith Fair had her perform, also the International Guitar festival in England was graced by her style.

Cara is totally at ease on stage, and thus can push more energy into performing and singing. This ease can be heard on the CD. You can feel it as you listen to track after track (she must be magical on stage!). Cara is one-third of the Wailin' Jennys (see the review above). With haunting lyrics, a voice that complements that writing and playing, and one heck of a guitar player, she has learned her craft well, and *Tempting the Storm* seems to have no weak points. From the opening song, "Come All You Sailors", to the last track, the *a cappella* "The Blacksmith", it's a wonderful journey. All 11 tracks blend so well together that one just can't help but fall in love with that voice.

Terry St. James, Montreal, Quebec

Tim Readman. *Into the Red*. BC014. Tim Readman, P.O. Box 323, 916 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1K7 (website gives "#323" rather than "P.O. Box 323" as on CD); <tim@timreadman.com>; <www.timreadman.com>

Tim Readman, formerly of Fear of Drinking, has now issued his first solo CD. The 11 new titles (all original compositions) are well suited to convey Tim's humorous yet serious approach to the world. This is songwriting for all to relate to and admire, expressing a full range of emotion, from depth to irreverence, in both words and music. Some songs reflect his roots in the Northeast of England, some record the experiences of immigrants in Canada and in their memories of the "old country", while others speak to our common humanity with wit and tenderness. There is a constant

fine reflective treatment of all his themes. The changing themes are well mirrored in the arrangements and the choice of instruments throughout the CD.

On each song Tim is accompanied by one or two musicians, and the different accompanists and variety of instruments complement the contrasting flavours of the pieces. Amy Stephen is heard on piano, accordion and harp, Geoff Kelly on flute, whistle and bodhran, Tom Neville on bass, fiddle and mandolin, James Ong on viola da Gamba, Shona Le Mottée and Jennie Bice on fiddle. These are throughout carefully chosen partners to the songs, and complement and strengthen their emotional impact and interest.

The music of the Northeast of England is the product of a number of traditions. The oldest is the border ballad, a repository of historical information and comment on the great events of border history, and of how to deal with life in the continually uncertain Scottish borders: "Chevy Chase" commemorates an invasion of England. In part, Readman takes over this tradition in commenting on history through its effect on lives. The second tradition is that of the working class, in industrial songs that complain of the hard lives in coal mining and in the shipping and shipbuilding industry, or celebrate the lives of ordinary people in the new communities of the Industrial Revolution. The most familiar of these songs is probably "The Keel Row". The third is the tradition of the music hall, for which many songwriters of the 19th century composed their works. Here, "Blaydon Races" (Tim's version is recorded on *In Black and White*) has gained lasting fame, forming almost an anthem for the lower Tyne Valley; others like "Wor Nanny's a Mazer" and "Keep Yer Feet Still, Geordie Hinny" record amusing incidents in life for audiences in clubs and pubs, and just singing along.

Songwriters like Tim Readman and Jez Lowe are worthy continuants of the long tradition of songwriting -- often commentary on the hardship and humour of everyday life -- that have kept the Northeast vibrant through centuries. The northern counties of Northumberland and Durham were a heartland of the Industrial Revolution. They were much too far away from London for anyone in "the south" (England south of County Durham) to regard the industrial area as more than a potential mine from which to draw coal -- and money -- while paying little attention to the actual circumstances of the inhabitants. "Geordies" were always forced to fend for themselves in culture as well as industry. Great inventors like George and Robert Stephenson, father and son, who created the railways, and Joseph Swann, the inventor of the telephone, are

commemorated in the North but not well known in the rest of England. Margaret Thatcher during her time as Prime Minister worked hard to destroy the coal mines and other heavy industries that formed the basis of the industrial revolution in the North East. In the process of weakening the power base of the mining unions, she brought many communities and villages to poverty in the pursuit of a dream of riches for southern investors. The history of these events invites songs to remember them by.

A breadth of interest appears even on the cover of the CD. Photographs show Tim in Renaissance mode, with books and music. The songs reflect his life from childhood, commenting on the political storms of Northern life, and in the voice of an emigrant, especially as an immigrant to Canada. His writing and music prove winners both for immigrants and for native Canadians. For the emigrant Geordie there is deep nostalgia. Names like Seaham Harbour and Whitley Bay roll familiarly off Tim's tongue. "Fish in the River" even manages to celebrate one possible good effect of Thatcher's demolition of the mining industry. "No coal in the river" means there are fish again after a century or so, and children can safely swim. This may be compared with the more sober indictment of the Thatcher revolution in "When Coal was King", which was recorded on *Fear of Drinking's Get On With It* (1993).

Other songs tell more personal tales. "The Sparky's Lament" tells the story of the shock facing a sailor who finally came home to Liverpool after 30 years abroad when his mother died. He walks in to find his relatives parcelling up all the souvenirs he sent to his mother over the years; following his memories, he finds that car parks cover the remnants of his childhood. The song brings out how the harder edge of leaving home is returning to find your emotional world destroyed. In an evocative drama, "The Thousand Dollar Ring", a story told in several voices, a boy from Vancouver accidentally finds his unknown father in foreign parts ("far off Whitley Bay"). Closer to home, Tim's snobbish and terrifying granny is immortalized in the story of his family's holidays, spent in terror of her anger in "the poshest end of dear old Whitley Bay".

In more reflective moments, Tim invokes our common humanity. "You Change", "No Longer Relevant", "Dog Days", "The Click", all speak to the human predicament and character. "You Change" is for all those life changes that you see in context only later. "Dog Days" is for the time when passion is spent and you can't love someone again. "No Longer Relevant" comments gently on how some people don't appreciate

what is meaningful in life. On Tim's website he says of this that it "keeps meaning something different". It is surely a mark of true art that investigating the artist's intentions is just a first step towards understanding the work, while the listener's own experience is enriched by the ensuing reflections.

"On the Brink" is about world politics, settled by men failing to talk to each other. It is inspired by the Reykjavik summit, when Reagan and Gorbachev managed to talk to each other for only 11+ hours. By contrast, "Oh Canada" is a celebration of Tim's affection for his adopted country, and the virtues often derided; this witty version responds positively to stereotypes of Canada, and is definitely an improvement on the original! Finally, "Dave's World" celebrates the value of a concerned eccentric and his "living museum for the people that's free".

I have found much to think about, and I thoroughly enjoyed this CD while playing it many times in the course of writing this review. Perhaps ineffectively, given the rich texture of the songs, I have tried to summarise my thoughts in response to Tim's complex yet direct mastery of words and music. His strong personal voice, with commitments to themes of importance, speaks in the same vein as James Keelaghan, Eileen McGann and David Francey, while Tim's sense of humour stands comparison with that of The Arrogant Worms. Everything from world politics to the celebration of what most people would call junk: that's Tim! I highly recommend this CD.

Janet D. Sisson, Calgary

Book review:

Gail de Vos. *Storytelling for Young Adults: A Guide for Tales to Teens*, 2nd ed., 2003. 208 pp. ISBN 1-56308-903-3. Libraries Unlimited, 88 Post Rd. W, Westport, CT 06881, USA; 1-800-225-5800; <www.lu.com>

It would be extremely difficult to find a more qualified person to have produced and compiled a book of this high quality or calibre than Edmonton's own special gift to the world of storytelling and oral narratives, Gail de Vos, storyteller, author, folklorist, teacher and specialist in the literature of children and young adults for many years. This is the second edition of an effort so ably started over a decade ago. It is of that rare breed of books that are both entertaining and necessary, at least to storytellers, story lovers, story explorers, teachers, librarians and anyone involved with teenagers. De Vos states that, while the tales she has cited and included are suitable for young adult

audiences, they may not be for everyone who may wish to tell stories to an audience; stories, like anything else, are "each to one's own taste".

Nine chapters make up this volume. The first two are an overview of the field of storytelling for young adults. In Chapter 1, de Vos gives the general reasons for telling tales to young adults and why this target audience finds the telling of tales to be so popular and of a positive nature. Chapter 2 gives guidelines, tips and technical information for tellers who wish to tell tales before young adults. The next six chapters are, to put it simply, a treasure trove of an annotated bibliography of approximately 225 stories which de Vos regards as suitable for telling to young adult groups. The tales are divided into six general headings: stories of the fantastic and the supernatural; traditional folk- and fairytales; stories of life, including legends, true tales of family life and experience, and biographical narratives where personality is more important than plot; stories of the spirit, mostly taken from the world of myth and origin narratives; tales of laughter, foolishness and trickery; and stories taken from the arts and sciences, involving persons from history and the world of myth and legend. In Chapter 9, de Vos has included 20 sample story texts, which she has freely adapted, in her own words and style, from actual tales she herself has told before young adult audiences, tales encompassing all six of the story groupings from the earlier chapters.

The variety and diverse types of tales de Vos has included are truly amazing: tall tales and ghost stories, contemporary legends and fractured fairytales, creation myths and historical legends, trickster tales and moralistic fables, and so much more. Each annotation includes a synopsis of the story, a printed source citation and, where appropriate, any comments by the original author or teller which de Vos has deemed informative or necessary to the understanding of the story. There is enough sourcing and citation info to please even the fussiest individual who loves this sort of thing; each chapter has its own bibliography, and the book concludes with several indices as well as a grand bibliography of the collections and anthologies which de Vos has made reference to. My personal favorites are: "The Legend of King Hurla"; a bizarre reworking of a contemporary legend which she calls "A Twist in Life"; a chilling ghost tale entitled "Room for One More"; the traditional Russian folktale "Old Frost and Young Frost"; a most thoughtful and unusual creation and origin tale called "Why All Tongues are Red"; an amusing modern tale of just rewards, "The Final Exam"; and two stories derived from classic

literature and the natural sciences, "A Pound of Flesh" and "Wodin's Wagon".

This is the kind of "must" volume that truly belongs on every story lover's shelf, and there is enough and more than enough in here to please every type of teller, from the beginner to those who have been laboring in the narrative vineyard for years and years. For anyone who works with young adults in any capacity, be it as a teacher, librarian, camp counsellor or other group leader, this book will be an absolute godsend when and if a story session rears its glorious narrative head. It will enchant, entertain, instruct and illuminate for story lovers everywhere the wonderful, magical and grand world of the storyteller's art.

Robert Rodriquez, New York, NY

A Peak in Darien

Ball & Chain. *Bare Bones*. Moo 714. Michael Ball & Jody Benjamin, 186 Bradley Ave., Vanier, Ont. K1L 7E2; <mj@ballandchain.ca>; <www.ballandchain.ca>
————— *Trouble All the Time*. Moo 715. (as above)

Brown Ale. *Self Titled*. TM0309. 39 Windermere Crt., Brampton, Ont. L6X 2L5; <glennandlee-ann@sympatico.ca>

Finest Kind. *Silks & Spices*. FAM05. 285 Spencer St., Ottawa, Ont. K1Y 2R1; <www.finestkind.ca>

Aengus Finnan. *North Wind*. 2002. Borealis BCD 148. Borealis Recording Co., 225 Sterling Rd., Unit 19, Toronto, Ont. M6R 2B2; toll-free tel: 1-877-530-4288; <info@borealisrecords.com>; <www.borealisrecords.com>

Bill Garrett & Sue Tothrop. *Red Shoes*. BCD154. Borealis Recording Co., 225 Sterling Rd., Unit 19, Toronto, Ont. M6R 2B2; <info@borealisrecords.com>; <www.borealisrecords.com>

The Hayloft Romeos. *Live Off the Floor*. <thehayloftromeos.com> (no postal address on packaging)

Neil Hutchinson. *Songs from Halfway*. Neil Hutchinson, 1236 Stoneleigh Rd., Bracebridge, Ont. PIL 1W9

Ron Hynes. *Get Back Change*. BCD152. Borealis Recording Co. (address above); Festival Distribution Inc., 1351 Grant St., Vancouver, B.C. V5L 2X7; 1-800-633-8282; <mailorder@festival.bc.ca>; <www.festival.bc.ca>; Big Daddy Music Distribution, 162 North 8th St., Kenilworth, NJ 07033, USA

David K. *Take a Mile*. BHS 321. Blue House Songs, P.O. Box 163, Mill Bay, B.C. V0R 2P0; <davidk@condisc.com>; <www.davidk.biz>

Barry Luft. *Folksinger's Fire*. 623667-208147. 4316 16A St. SW, Calgary, Alta. T2T 4L5; <bmhluft@telusplanet.net>; <www.BarryLuft.com>

Harry Manx & Kevin Breit. *Jubilee*. NBM0014. Northern Blues Music, 225 Sterling Ave., Unit 19, Toronto, Ont. M6R B2; <info@northernblues.com>; <www.northernblues.com>

Trevor Mills. *Karaoke Cowboy*. TQP 001. <trevor@trevormills.com>; <www.trevormills.com> (no addresses on packaging)

R. Carlos Nakai. *Sanctuary*. CR-7060. Canyon Records, 3131 West Clarendon Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85017, USA; <canyon@canyonrecords.com>; <www.canyonrecords.com>

Ron Nigrini. *Songs from Turtle Island*. OA 1202. <westrad@hotmail.com>; <www.ronnigrini.com> (no postal address on packaging)

No Guff. *They're Red Hot*. HDR20609. John Rutherford, P.O. Box 2031, Sta. M, Calgary, Alta. T2P 2M2; <johnnynoguff@yahoo.com>; <www.noguff.ca>

Nothin' But Trouble. *Just a Taste*. <howl_at_the_moon@canada.com>; <www.nothinbuttrouble.com> (new address, different from packaging)

Mose Scarlett, Jackie Washington & Ken Whiteley. *Sitting on a Rainbow*. BCD153. Borealis Recording Co. (address above)

Brenda Stubbert. *Music All Around*. CP-2003-1. Cranford Publications, Box 42, Englishstown, N.S. BOC 1H0; <psc@cranfordpub.com>; <www.cranfordpub.com/stubbert>

Ian Tamblyn. *Like the Way You're Tinkin'*. NT-24. North Track Records, Box 68, Sta. B, Ottawa, Ont. K1P 6C3; <tamblyn@hotmail.com>; <www.tamblyn.com>

Cindy Thompson. *I Can Feel It In the Air*. RBMA002. Cindy Thompson/RBM Associates, 608 Bayview Dr., Midland, Ont. L4R 2P5; <cindy.butineau@sympatico.ca> (new email address, different from packaging); <www.bconnex.net/~cbma>

Various. *Songs of the Sea: Traditional Folk Songs & Narratives from the Dr. Helen Creighton Collection*. Helen Creighton Folklore Society, P.O. Box 236, Dartmouth, N.S. BY 2Y3; <www.corvuscorax.org:8080/~gseto/creighton>

Various. *Songs of the "Segwun"*. RRM1. Stan Wallace Tait, P.O. Box 105, Bracebridge, Ont. PIL 1T5

Le Vent du Nord. *Maudite Moisson!*. BCD 151. Borealis Recording Co., Festival Distribution Inc. (see above for addresses)