

LISA KNAPP – AN INTRODUCTION



'I have fallen in love with her beautiful album' Huw Stephens, Radio 1

Lisa Knapp is a fast emerging and highly distinctive artist from one of the most creative and active underground music scenes of recent times. She merges a radiant style of traditional folk and self-penned song, with fiddle, hammer dulcimer, strings, banjo and sonic delights from the technological age. 'Wild and Undaunted' is her debut album and is due for release via Ear to the Ground Records in April 2007.

Lisa was born and grew up in South London's Tooting area. She was brought up in a musical family where sing-alongs around the piano were common, the old Bush record player was put to good use and the school provided her with violin lessons. Lisa's musical development led her through drum and bass, teenage raves, acid house and an electric guitar bought to learn Jimi Hendrix songs.

Then, in her teens, she came across folk music when she heard a friend's record collection. She listened to the extraordinary voices, the vivid stories and the superb musicianship of Annie Briggs, Shirley Collins, Martin Carthy and Pentangle and she was hooked. Soon, a wide-eyed Lisa found herself drawn to the London folk clubs.

"At the time I was completely out of step with my friends and was one of the few young people there. Yet there was a special, all-inclusive vibe within the club that felt right to me."

She dug her violin out of the loft and started to play again, joining workshops and classes, playing at Irish sessions at Tir Na Nog in Wandsworth and Kilkenny Tavern in South Wimbledon, and doing floor-spots at folk clubs leading to a festival performance.

[Lisa] 'It went really well and I thought, 'I could do this'.

Then, just as everything was falling into place, serious health problems put music on the back burner for a number of years. During this time she met her now partner, Irish fiddler, Gerry Diver and had a child. Encouraged by Gerry, she gradually returned to music and recorded her version of the traditional song 'Blacksmith' for his debut album 'Diversions'.

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Influential rock producer Youth (The Verve/U2/Paul McCartney) heard the track playing in a studio on London's Tin Pan Alley, Denmark Street.

[Lisa] 'It was completely by chance. At the time he was running an alternative folk night in Portabello with Simon Tong from the Verve. He offered to work with me.'

[Youth] 'Lisa has a rare and untamed quality to her voice, unheard since the days of Judy Sill, Sandy Denny and Buffy St Marie. Tapping deep into the well of tradition, she keeps her feet firmly on the ground of the current singer songwriter/alt-folk renaissance, creating a uniquely timeless sound, raw in emotion and feel. Beautiful!'

In early 2006 Lisa started to record tracks for her own debut album, 'Wild and Undaunted', discovering a way to voice the material which was all her own. Included on the album is a version of 'Blacksmith' remixed by Youth as well as three original songs resulting from his encouragement. However, the album is above all a collection of folk songs, old and new.

[Lisa] 'Many of the songs on my album are arrangements of traditional folk songs. I love the fact that these songs have been sung by generations of people before they've reached me.'

Lisa looks like a young woman in her 20s but this belies her experience. Actually now in her early 30s, she is finally ready to emerge a remarkably complete artist in her own right.

In Autumn 2006 Lisa performs with traditional folk performers including Spiers & Boden and Julie Fowlis, while also performing with the 'nu-folk' set, amongst others, the much feted The Memory Band.

Lisa Knapp has certainly made a remarkable first album. 'Wild and Undaunted' takes the listener on an enlightening journey, giving newcomers and traditionalists a real taste of where folk has come from, and an insight into where it might be heading.

Tracks from the new album have been played on The Huw Stephens Show (Radio 1), The Mike Harding Show (Radio 2), Late Junction (Radio 3) and The Andy Kershaw Show (Radio 3). Lisa was also featured in October's issue of fRoots.

'Wild and Undaunted' will be released on 26th March 2007 on Ear To The Ground Records and will be followed by a twenty date UK tour by Lisa with Julie Murphy and Jenna Reid.

Live dates coming up:

Fri 8th Dec	Gloucester Guildhall supporting Clive Gregson
Sat 27th Jan	Celtic Connections, Glasgow
Sat 10th Feb	Doncaster Folk Festival
Sat 31st Mar	Oxford Folk Festival
17th Apr - 13th May	UK tour with Julie Murphy and Jenna Reid

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