

Kate Rusby – Bio

Kate Rusby was born on December 1st 1973 and raised in Barnsley, Yorkshire. Kate played with her sister and parents, Steve and Ann, in the family ceilidh band during her early teen years. Kate was an accomplished fiddle player by the age of five, and influenced by the music of Yorkshire based folk musicians, Dave Burland [an early career mentor] and Nic Jones, Kate later took up the guitar.

Rusby made her solo debut at the age of fifteen at Holmfirth Folk Festival, accompanied by her sister, Emma. That day, Kate sang Tanita Tikaram's "Good Tradition." In her late teens Rusby enrolled in a drama course in the Performing Arts Dept. of Barnsley College and then went on to form a duo with Kathryn Roberts, resulting in the self-titled album "**Kate Rusby & Kathryn Roberts.**" The recording won the Folk Roots Folk Album of the Year award in 1995. When the pair appeared at a folk festival in Portugal, they met the brothers Sean, Sam and Seth Lakeman. Gifted musicians, the brothers went on to form the teenage folk super group Equation. For a time Kate was a member of Equation, along with Kathryn, but no recording sessions took place. Preferring to pursue traditional folk music, Kate left the band and launched her solo career.

Rusby made her debut as a solo recording artist with "**Hourglass**" on her own label, Pure Records. The album included original songs by Rusby as well as traditional material such as "Sir Eglamore" and "Annan Waters." Not afraid to tackle contemporary material, the collection included the McCusker/Miller co-write "Radio Sweethearts." In parallel with her solo career, Kate was also a member of the female folk super group, The Poozies and she appeared on the EP "**Come Raise Your Head**" [1996] and the album "**Infinite Blue**" [1998]. She continued touring with the Poozies until October 1999. Her sophomore solo collection "**Sleepless**" appeared that year, and further consolidated her reputation as an accomplished writer and performer. The album included Iris DeMent's "Our Town" and Kate's own "The Sleepless Sailor." Produced, like her debut disc, by John McCusker and featuring his fiddle and banjo, other guest players included Ian Carr [guitar], Michael McGoldrick [flute, whistle] and Conrad Ivitsky [double bass].

"**Sleepless**" was nominated for the UK's prestigious Mercury Music Prize. Rusby was named "Folk Artist of the Year" by BBC 2 in early 2000 and the album "**Sleepless**" won the BBC's "Folk Album of the Year" award, the same year. Her first album of the new millennium, "**Little Lights**" was another marriage of the traditional and the contemporary, and included her won "I Courted A Sailor" and Richard Thompson's "Withered And Died." In 2002, Kate issued "**10**" a retrospective that featured live and studio material. It was by way of a celebration of her first decade as a professional musician. The music of Kate Rusby and her partner John McCusker is prominently featured on the soundtrack album to the movie "**Heartland**" [2003]. The film was directed by Damien O'Donnell, who also made the hit movie "**East Is East**" [1999]. O'Donnell has described "**Heartlands**" as a "*B road movie*." While Kate contributed previously available tracks, McCusker's material was new.

Kate Rusby's fourth solo album of entirely new material, "**Underneath The Stars**," was released in the late summer of 2003, and was followed exactly two years later by "**The Girl Who Couldn't Fly**." In November 2003, Pure Records [and later Compass Records in the States] issued the Kate Rusby and band DVD "**Live In Leeds**" filmed on 6th September that year in Leeds City Varieties, an old style English music hall. Rusby's next solo outing "**Awkward Annie**" was issued in the U.K. by Pure Records in the summer of 2007, and in the States by Compass Records towards the close of the year.

Discography :

with The Poozies "**Come Raise Your Head**" [1996] ; "**Infinite Blue**" [1998] :

with Kathryn Roberts "**Kate Rusby & Kathryn Roberts**" [1995] :

with John McCusker "**Heartland**" [2003] :

Solo "**Hourglass**" [1997] ; "**Sleepless**" [1999] ; "**Little Lights**" [2001] ; "**10**" [2002] ; "**Underneath The Stars**" [2003] ; "**The Girl Who Couldn't Fly**" [2005] ; "**Awkward Annie**" [2007] :

DVD : "**Live In Leeds**" [2003] :

Arthur Wood

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