

# fROOTS

## ALBUMS '01 Pick Of The Year

Multicultural Europe

Souad Massi • China

Spiers & Boden • Oojami

Kultur Shock • Polka

Jaojoby • Zanzibar

and loads more!

Local Music From Out There

BBC  
RADIO 3  
AWARDS  
FOR  
WORLD  
MUSIC

## fROOTS no. 18

Joe Strummer & The Mescaleros

Tinariwen • Cara Dillon

Gigi • Kultur Shock

Dick Gaughan • Souad Massi

Jaojoby • Little George Sueref

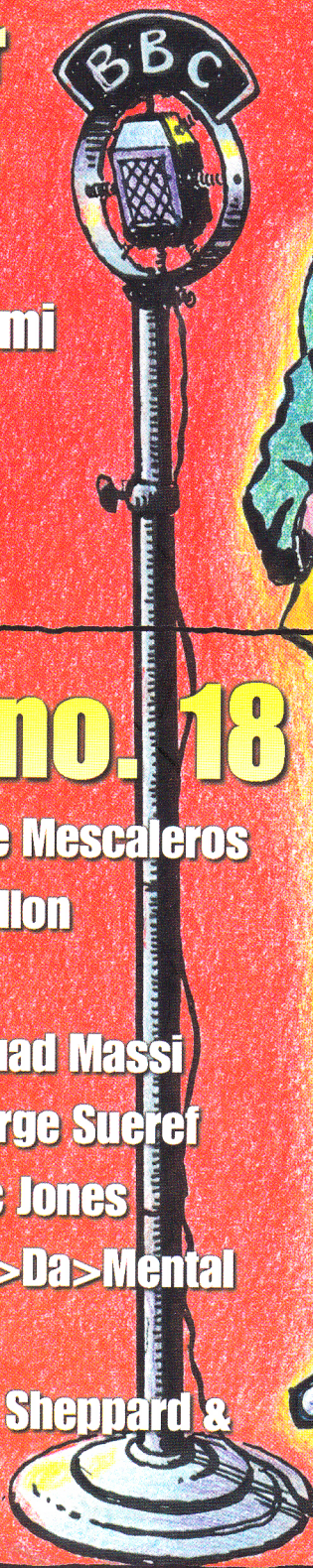
Houssaine Kili • Nic Jones

Haig Yazdjian • Fun>Da>Mental

Chris Coe • Kékélé

Paul De Boe • Andy Sheppard &

Kathryn Tickell



AND NOW, THE AWARD  
FOR **ALBUM OF THE  
YEAR...** CAN I HAVE  
THE ENVELOPE  
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# VARIOUS ARTISTS

## **If I Had A Song... The Songs Of Pete Seeger, Vol. 2** Appleseed APR CD 1055

Almost three years on from the appearance of the 2-CD *Volume 1*, and with another year to go till the final episode of this excellent tribute series arrives, *Volume 2*, a single CD release, amounts to a splendid blend of some things similar and some things new.

Billy Bragg and Eliza Carthy return to accentuate their way through *If I Had A Hammer*, while Jackson Browne teams up with Joan Baez for a six-minute interpretation of *Gauntanamera*. Last time Bonnie Raitt was



Jackson's singing partner, while Nanci Griffith covered *Hammer*. The only Seeger tune to reappear on this collection is *Oh Had I A Golden Thread*. On this occasion, Judy Collins gives way to a pair of youngsters, Dar Williams and Toshi Reagon. Their low-key version is, quite frankly, staggering. Toshi's mum Bernice turned up on *Volume I* with her band, Sweet Honey In The Rock. This project may be incestuous, but when the music is this good who cares?

Considering that Steve Earle has adopted an increasingly vocal stance on the subject of the death penalty over the last few years, it's hardly surprising that he growls his way through *Walking Down Death Row*. While Seeger explains in the liner booklet that *Snow, Snow*, performed by Eric Anderson, was inspired by generations of young people deserting small town America, the lyrics could, chillingly, be applied to the purging of Jewish communities in Europe 60 years ago. John McCutcheon's 30-year plus career as a musician has been very much that of a folk traditionalist, yet accompanied by Corey Harris, *Talking Union* is presented as a rap song. Proving that he sees no boundaries in music, Pete interjects the word "talk" on numerous occasions throughout the latter track, injecting an amusing edge into his otherwise serious lyric. In fact Seeger's voice can be heard on a number of songs. Arlo Guthrie and Pete deliver the amusing road saga *This Old Car*, plus the previously unrecorded Woody Guthrie/Seeger co-write, *66 Highway Blues*. Past brushes with the work of Kim & Reggie Harris and Magpie have failed to move me, but their rendition of *Old Devil Time* has somewhat altered that opinion. The wonderful sung/spoken closing cut, *Long May The World Go*, featuring Seeger and Larry Long, originally appeared on the latter's Smithsonian Folkways recording of the same name.

The contribution by Dave Carter and Tracy Grammer, *The Emperor Is Naked Today-O*, may be one of the shortest items here, but their gentle and intuitive instrumental and vocal reading makes for one of the standouts. Running a close second are John Wesley Harding's Rickenbacker-led reading of *Words, Words, Words* and the Joel Rafael Band's *Last Train To Nuremberg*. The latter lyric implies that over the first three post WWII decades, certain free world governments were guilty of serious war crimes; a truth that has coming glaringly to light in recent years.

Distributed in the UK by Koch.

Arthur Wood



# JOHN McCUTCHEON

## **Supper's On The Table... Everybody Come In!** Rounder 1166 – 11612 – 2

Released by Rounder in celebration of their thirtieth birthday, *Supper's On The Table... Everybody Come In !* is a compilation of recordings that McCutcheon made, during the closing decade of last century. Two of the seventeen tracks, the opening *Immigrant* and *Room At The Top Of The Stair* are previously unreleased selections which we'll return to later.

In a solo career that has also spanned thirty years, and witnessed practically an equivalent number of album releases, McCutcheon has applied his multitude of talents in numerous areas of acoustic music. He is acknowledged as one of the hammered dulcimer's finest exponents, while the, generally, self-penned material on his recordings appeals to old-time as well as contemporary fans of folk music. His much-lauded children's recordings (that work equally well for adults) have received Grammy nominations on five occasions. All of the parts that make up McCutcheon's musical canon are represented in this collection.

*Leviathan* is an instrumental, featuring dulcimer, clarinet and synthesiser, that resulted from a whale watch John attended off the Oregon coast. *Soup* – a song for cold winter days, *The Principle* – children at as school discover the power of peaceful united protest, and *Calling All The Children Home* – a charming family oriented song, hail from his children's oeuvre. When it comes to presenting politically slanted material, McCutcheon doesn't employ in your face tactics. McCutcheon's words simply allow the story to evolve, and in the process (if you've been paying attention) he subliminally implants his intended message in your subconscious. Without preaching, his 1993 song *Dead Man Walking* (inspired by Sr. Helen Prejean's book) questions the principle of capital punishment, while *Jericho* recalls Mrs. Rosa Parks' Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott of December 1955.

At the outset I mentioned that two previously unreleased tracks were include here. *Immigrant* bears a message that quietly asserts that all men should be brothers, with the telling summation "I am a long, long line, One you have forgotten that is true, I am everything you knew, I am your glory." The small person who came to live in the *Room At The Top Of The Stairs* is an honest testament to the arrival of, and the raising of children.

Arthur Wood



# KATY MOFFATT

## **Cowboy Girl** Shanachie 6054

Cowboy songs have been around for as long as ranchers have raised cattle in that mystical region, the west. A sub-genre of the music that they generally churn out in those Nashville, Tennessee studios, cowboy songs have enjoyed something of a revival in the past three decades. Ian Tyson's classic 1986 collection *Cowboyography* probably represents the epitome of this genre. That collection included the Tyson and Tom Russell co-write *Navajo Rug*, and went on to win a Juno Award [the Canadian equivalent of a Grammy].

In due course, Russell cut a couple of cowboy song albums of his own – *Cowboy Real* (1992) and *Song Of The West – The Cowboy Collection* (1997). Russell and Katy Moffatt met at the 1986 Kerrville Folk Festival when they were New Folk Songwriting Contest judges. Following that meeting a song writing and recording partnership was forged which remains active to this day.

Katy's fifteen-song collection, *Cowboy Girl*, was produced by David Wilkie and Scott O'Malley. During the '80s Wilkie, a Canadian, was a support musician on many of Ian Tyson's albums, although, strangely, not the aforementioned Tyson classic. Moffatt and Wilkie have performed onstage on an occasional basis since the late '80s.

Based on the foregoing, it's somewhat natural that the trail would lead to Katy Moffatt making a cowboy song album, sooner or later. It's significant, that Moffatt has avoided the pitfall of settling for the obvious, by including Ian Tyson songs. In fact, there's only one Tom Russell cover featured – *Hallie Lonigan* – the sad tale of a hard working rancher's widow who reluctantly remarries, when left to raise two young children. Proof that the genre has enjoyed universal appeal for many decades, lies in the Moffatt/ Wilkie arrangement of a couple of Leadbelly songs, *When I Was A Cowboy* and *John Hardy*. Elsewhere this well-balanced collection includes Joe Ely's *Indian Cowboy*, *Me And My Uncle* by the late John Phillips, plus her brother Hugh's tale of the supernatural *The Ghost Lights Of Marfa*. Moffatt's a cappella rendition of the traditional *Texas Rangers* is a tour de force, and David Halley's tale of a horse called Further reflects intensely intelligent writing. As for contributions from Katy's pen, *Magdalena And The Jack Of Spades* is a tale of the heroine's passion for a ruthless bandit, while the *Black-Eyed Caballero* who "brings the starlight when he comes" is a song that focuses on a hopeless love affair.

*Arthur Wood.*



👉 **Paul Burch *Last Of My Kind*** (Spit & Polish SPITCD 006) The 10 songs and three instrumentals are intended as a musical accompaniment to *Jim The Boy*, Tony Earley's tale of a fatherless 10-year-old's rite of passage, in North Carolina, circa 1934. Pseudo old-timey material that mainly focuses on Jim's relationships with those around him. Maybe after I've read the book, all will be crystal clear? Shoeshine Records, PO Box 15193, Glasgow G2 6LB, Scotland.