



Luka Bloom “**Between The Mountain And The Moon**” Bar None / LukaBloom.com

Bloom’s previous disc “**Keeper Of The Flame**,” a set of cover songs, allowed him to draw breath and regenerate his creative spirit. In fact *spirit*, or at least the adjective/noun, *spiritual*, is an appropriate word to use in connection with this collection of eleven Bloom originals. Like *a jewel in a crown*, placed [almost] centre stage are “Love Is A Place I Dream Of,” “Gabriel” and “Soshin.” The liner booklet respectively, and simply, states “*Dedicated to Christina Noble*” and “*Dedicated to Maura O’Halloran*,” in relation to the first and last of those songs. Enlightenment brings understanding, so let me add the following insights. In 1989, aged 45, Christina Noble, an Irish/Australian, travelled to Vietnam having endured periods of indescribable hardship in her life up to that date. In the 13 years since establishing her Childrens’ Foundation in Vietnam and Mongolia, Noble has provided medical assistance and educational programmes to more than 140,000 children. Maura O’Halloran, an Irish/American Catholic, was 27 when she died in 1982. Having spent the three previous years in a Buddhist monastery in Japan, she had recently graduated as a dharma teacher. Maura was making her way to Ireland, with the intention of establishing a Buddhist monastery, when she died. These days, *Soshin*, her Buddhist name, is revered as a saint. I have always retained a sense that special, unsung people walk this earth. People we hardly ever hear about. People who quietly go about what they see as their life’s work, with no sense of gaining reward here on earth. People with a vision. Unsung heroes. All I would entreat you to do is listen to “Love Is A Place I Dream Of,” “Gabriel” and “Soshin,” since Bloom has blessed them with wonderful words. The closing line “*I’m coming home child*,” on “Love Is A Place.....” says it all. As for the inclusion of “Gabriel,” surely that requires no explanation. If two of the foregoing songs possess a Far East perspective, it’s somewhat appropriate that the album opens with “Monsoon.” As if to link this collection into one continuous circle, while maintaining the Irish/Far East link that I have alluded to, the album closes with “Hand Of A Farmer,” “*dedicated to Micho Russell*.” Approaching the age of fifty, during the sixties folk music revival, Country Clare farmer, Russell’s performances of countless traditional Irish tunes on the penny whistle brought him national and international fame. Humour has always been a dominant feature of Irish culture, and in his tribute to the nation’s peat collectors, “I’m A Bogman,” Bloom inserts the line “*I breathe it in as I pedal on by*.” Surely the latter is a backward glance [with smile] and cross-reference to his 1992 album “**The Acoustic Motorbike**.” It appears that the song of parting “As I Waved Goodbye” was inspired by Heinrich Harrer’s book “**Seven Years In Tibet**.” Enlightenment, as I said, is a wonderful thing. As for, “**Between The Mountain And The Moon**” it is a truly rewarding spiritual [and musical] journey that I would advise you to embark upon.....soon.

Folkwax Rating 8 out of 10

Arthur Wood  
Kerrville Kronikles 06/02