

Field and Dyke grew out of an oral history project in which Pedler interviewed over 40 people living in the deeply divided agricultural region of South Holland, which saw some of the largest votes to leave the EU. Greg Russell brings his vocals, guitar and usual strong social commentary (he put together the *Shake the Chains* project reviewed in #132). The rhythm and sounds of farm machinery are the bedrock of the music, with spoken-word excerpts and incisive lyrics getting to the root of the current state of community relations.

'Poverty Knock Retold' takes a traditional Lancashire factory song and reimagines it with Piotrs taking the place of Peters. 'Ready Hands' – a song based on interviews from either side of the immigration debate – is neatly set to a Polish dance tune called 'Haciok'. And the wonderfully named 'Delta 3000 LD SB XY Plastic Presser' is a tune by Pedler on accordion and hurdy-gurdy for the farm labourers who have to listen to this machine all day.

NATHANIEL HANDY

TRACK TO TRY *Poverty Knock Retold*

Janne Rättyä & Patrick Demenga Tango Ladeado

Alba (41 mins)

★★★★★

Finnish accordionist celebrates tango's global connections



Finland's tango, while a spin-off of the Argentinian/Parisian original and almost as old, is a separate

tradition altogether. Its cool, northern setting and exotic influences, from German marches to Russian waltzes, have given it a different texture and while ballroom dance remains a vital expression of it, there's not the emotive effusiveness of the Buenos Aires variety.

Cast a glance at this tracklist and curious names catch the eye: Erik Satie, John Cage, Igor Stravinsky, Domenico

Scarlatti and Terry Riley – author of the taut, angular title-track (which translates as 'leaning' or 'teetering' tango, as portrayed on the sleeve). This is a cerebral, rather sober and at times ponderous study of tango. Yet, it also has something of the street busker quality, Rättyä's accordion and Demenga's cello wandering loosely around the compositions, and the sound given a wintry, Seine-banks echo production treatment. Moreover, these haughty tangos echo more familiar standards – a piece by Spanish post-romantic Isaac Albéniz sounds more than vaguely like Gardel's 'Por Una Cabeza'. Only one trad Argentinian tango is included, and the album ends with an austere, astringent version of Piazzolla's 'Le Grand Tango'. An invigorating virtuoso lesson, celebrating tango's global connections rather than its Río de la Plata roots.

CHRIS MOSS

TRACK TO TRY *Perpetual Tango*

Romano Drom Give Me Wine

Riverboat Records (48 mins)

★★★★

Hungarian Gypsy band celebrate 20 years together



Hungarian band Romano Drom have been together for at least 20 years; in that time they have established

themselves as one of the country's most important Romani groups. As the helpful sleeve notes explain, the musicians are from the Oláh subgroup of Hungarian Roma, and are thus a minority within a minority, whose name comes from an old Germanic word meaning 'foreigner'. Perhaps this 'foreignness' is something that has encouraged them to combine their own traditional melodies with distant echoes of flamenco, Russian Gypsy music, sometimes even a relaxed cowboy swing, and capable guitar solos from Antal Kovács.

There are a few original compositions, but much of the material consists of contrafacta, new lyrics in the Romani language written to traditional melodies. Singers sometimes burst out into a flourish of nonsense syllables, like a particularly energetic form of scat-singing, while the addition of a string quartet, used especially effectively on the ambitious 'But Te Trajisz', gives a special touch of class.

KIM BURTON

TRACK TO TRY *But Te Trajisz*

June Tabor Airs and Graces

Topic Records (55 mins)

★★★★★

Another classic album from the Topic Records archive



Continuing the *Topic Treasures* series of reissues to celebrate the label's 80th birthday, June Tabor's 1976 solo

debut comes with four live bonus tracks from 1971-74 and excellent sleeve notes from Tabor herself and Colin Irwin. These ten Child Ballads and songs were recorded at Sound Techniques in London shortly after her *Silly Sisters* release with Maddy Prior – that's two classic albums in the space of a few months.

As in the years of folk club performances in the early 1970s, around half of these songs, including a spine-tingling account of Eric Bogle's 'The Band Played Waltzing Matilda' and Belle Stewart's 'Queen Among the Heather', are delivered unaccompanied. Nic Jones and multi-instrumentalist John Gillaspie (who both featured on *Silly Sisters*) provide the music on 'Young Waters', among others, and the settings are distinctive – the weird, pioneering folktronica of the Rocksichord, as well as organ, piano, and Nic Jones' fiddle on 'The Merchant's Son'. 'Jealousy, treachery, poverty, prejudice and the futility of war are all here, but so is love rewarded,' Tabor notes in her introduction to this marvellous reissue. That's as reliable a guide as any, and the extra live tracks, comprising unaccompanied voice and extraordinary song, make it a must-have English folk classic.

TIM CUMMING

TRACK TO TRY *Queen Among the Heather*

Veretski Pass & Joel Rubin The Magid Chronicles

Golden Horn Records (66 mins)

★★★★★

Uncovering instrumental klezmer gems from the 1920s and 30s



At the height of the klezmer revival in the 1980s and 90s, there were dozens of (mainly) US bands

reinterpreting a fairly limited repertoire drawn from pre-war 78rpm recordings and players, such as Dave Tarras, who had emigrated to the US to

be celebrated by the new generation. But the fall of the Berlin Wall, the subsequent freedom to travel and research and the opening up of archives has revealed a rich new world of Jewish music in the old world. Joshua Horowitz, with his bands Budowitz and Veretski Pass, and clarinettist Joel Rubin have been at the forefront of this, so it's very exciting to have this release of instrumental music collected by Jewish ethnographer Sofia Magid (1892-1954) in Belarus and Ukraine (then part of the USSR) in the 1920s and 30s.

Priceless though the source material is, it isn't presented in a scholarly way (although the sources are documented) but arranged into eight instrumental suites combined with folk pieces from Turkey, Greece and Romania and new compositions. The group have highlighted the irregular phrases and harmonic shifts. The music comes out of the abyss bright and fresh with vibrant squeals on Rubin's C clarinet, with Cookie Segelstein on violin, Horowitz on button accordion and *cimbalom* and Stuart Brotman on bass. This is a valuable treasure, brilliantly refurbished.

SIMON BROUGHTON

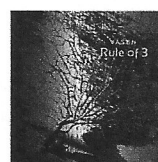
TRACK TO TRY *Vider Shlofn*

Väsen Rule of 3

NorthSide (46 mins)

★★★★★

Three musicians, three decades



I've heard the legendary Swedish band Väsen play in some strange places, often involving journeys

of deep snow, darkest cellars, or some midsummer madness, but they have never failed to make my heart sing, knowing that, at that moment, there was no better place to be. They've been making audiences feel like this for 30 years, which surely deserves some sort of celebration? But actually, what we want is to hear them carry on doing all the things they have done so brilliantly for so long, creating something magical with viola, *nyckelharpa* and guitar.

Of course, the wonderful quirkiness and cheekily tangled rhythms of Swedish dance tunes are the inspiration behind 30 years of traditional celebration, and in the hands of three of the world's finest musicians, Olov Johansson, Roger Tallroth and Mikael Marin, the sound

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