

'Dreamless Days' by The Meadows

Reviewed by Carl Filby



The Meadows are a family band hailing from Wales comprising three sisters, Titania, Melody & Fantasia, plus brother Harvey, unsurprisingly sharing the surname Meadows. They are very young and very talented, all being multi-instrumentalists and vocalists, writing all bar one track on their new second album.

The CD, on the band's own 'Pokey Cupboard' label, comes enclosed in a standard card sleeve with a nice design on the front, track list on the back and a lovely photo of the band in the middle. The eight page insert that comes with it contains all the lyrics and the usual credits plus some more photos of the band. There are 11 tracks on the album in total.

I don't know whether this is a 'concept' album as such, but it has the feel of one given the title and the fact that four of the track titles have a direct reference to dreams. The album also has a touch of the pre-Raphaelites about it, perhaps because of the colours, perhaps because of the dresses which the girls are wearing in the photos, perhaps because of my own romantic disposition! There are also connections with the Arthurian legends, which themselves are at least partly rooted amongst Welsh folklore, most obviously in the track entitled 'Merlin's Oak'.

The album certainly does have a dreamlike quality about it which is maybe stating the obvious but the exquisite harmonies reinforce that feel from the music. However, before the listener has a chance to fall into a trance-like state they are interrupted by an upbeat track such as the aforesaid 'Merlin's Oak' or 'Castell Dryslwyn', which, despite its Welsh name, has the distinctive feel of an Irish jig and a very pleasant one at that. Another sequence of 'dream' songs follows and then an instrumental track, 'Gelli Aur', featuring bodhran and violin. The ethereal quality of the album is maintained until the end with the final three tracks and it is undoubtedly the sort of music which will calm you down and provide more than a moment of relaxation as I believe was the band's intention.

The single from the album is 'Elusive Dreams' which is written by Fantasia, the poet of the band, and the song is underpinned by the beautiful playing of Harvey on the violin, a constant theme throughout the album. The Meadows cite Clannad as one of their major influences and they have already taken some steps on the road to emulating the success of that band by appearing twice at Celtic Connections as probably some of the youngest ever performers. Find out more about the band and their music on their website: <https://www.themeadowsband.co.uk/>