

'Whistlebow' by Whistlebow

Reviewed by Carl Filby



Whistlebow comprises Patricia Hammond on Vocals, Will Summers on Flutes & Crumhorns and Rupert Gillett on Cello, Guitars & Vocals. You can read their impressive CVs on the Whistlebow website.

The insert that comes with the well-packaged CD of the same name says that "In 2021, for reasons well known to future historians, Rupert, Will and Patricia at last had time to meet and experiment with their favourite early music and folk songs." For my part I am very pleased to see something so positive and worthwhile come out of the last few months. There are 11 tracks on the CD which are a mixture of traditional songs and those credited to a diverse range of other composers from Cyril Tawney to Henry VIII. Critically, all of the arrangements are by Whistlebow.

The thing that shines through from the outset is the joyful rendition of all the music on the album. Patricia Hammond is described elsewhere as being a mezzo-soprano and she certainly does have a very fine voice which interprets the mood of each piece brilliantly. Will Summers is steeped in the practice and study of early music and his fine playing underpins the feel of the whole album. Rupert Gillett gets an extraordinary, at times jazzy, sound from the strings as well as being credited with the recording, mixing & mastering of the CD.

I had not the slightest clue of the existence of Whistlebow before the CD dropped on the front doormat for review, but I always had a passing interest in medieval music which has now been revived. However, first and foremost this a high quality performance and modern interpretation of some very familiar early music and folk song. Anyone who enjoys listening to such music; any of the instruments played on the album, or wonderfully vibrant singing is likely to enjoy listening to this. It is a real pleasure to be able to appreciate separately the constituent parts of the music as well as their marvellous sum.

I have listened to the album at least 6 times now and find something different with each playing. I can't choose a favourite track for that reason nor can I even identify the one that I like least. I do hope Whistlebow play some concerts that I can attend in the near future and I also hope that their busy schedule allows Patricia, Will and Rupert to get together again to produce another album at some time in the near future. I imagine that possibility will also depend in part on sales from this album which is, appropriately, to be released on International Crumhorn Day on 3rd October 2021. I can't recommend it highly enough and you can find more details on the website <https://whistlebow.com/>