

'Tender' by Lady Maisery

Reviewed by Carl Filby



Although they have been playing together for the best part of 10 years, I had not come across Lady Maisery until receiving their latest CD for review.

Maybe that's because 'Tender' is their first album in six years though they have a back catalogue that I'm sure will be worth investigating on the evidence of this new release.

Lady Maisery (presumably named after the border ballad) are Hazel Askew, Hannah James and Rowan Rheingans, all of whom have their own solo careers and projects. They play a variety of instruments including harp, melodeon, harmonium, accordion and electric guitar.

The album 'Tender' contains mainly compositions credited to one or other of the band along with their own interpretation of songs by Björk, Tracy Chapman and Lal Waterson. Described in the press release as "an examination of femaleness from many sides" but don't let that put you off, if, for example, you happen to be an old male folkie like me. The lyrics are all about life in its many forms and there is a lot here for everyone including any misogynists who ought to at least appreciate the quality of the music.

To be honest there is much more in this album than can be easily found on the 2 or 3 plays that must suffice in the interests of getting this review out within a reasonable period of time. That said it's not difficult to enjoy the exquisite harmonies throughout the album and the more immediate appeal of '3000 miles', 'noughts and crosses' and 'birdsong'.

I will have to wait a while to see Lady Maisery live as I have already missed their Cambridge gig, clashing as it did with a 'Royston Live' event, however, you can still see them at many places elsewhere, throughout November and December as they tour to promote the new album. All the details are on their website:

<https://www.ladymaisery.com/>