

'Dusk Moon' by Rura

Reviewed by Carl Filby



Rura are an award winning Scottish band comprising Steven Blake on keys and pipes; Adam Brown on acoustic, bass & electric guitars; David Foley on bodhran & flute, and Jack Smedley on fiddle. They have been together since 2010 and first came to prominence at the 2011 Celtic Connections where they were Danny Kyle Award Open Stage winners. Dusk Moon is their fourth studio album and their sixth overall due for release on 17th March 2023.

I'm not normally a great fan of instrumental albums because I enjoy the human voice as well and enjoy the story-telling aspect of folk music. That said, I thoroughly enjoyed listening to this album and found that I didn't really miss the vocal element at all.

The reason for that is perhaps because I am also a great fan of both the fiddle and the bagpipes, the former driving a lot of the music on the album and the other coming to the fore on several tracks, perhaps most spectacularly in 'the Crossing'.

The opening track, 'Journeys Home', was specially commissioned to be part of Edinburgh's New Year celebrations in 2021 and does evoke that feeling of the importance of home that the Scots are famous for, perhaps in a similar fashion to Mark Knopfler's 'Local Hero', though with fiddle and pipes replacing the prominence of the guitar. The title track continues in that vein but then ups the tempo with what the press release aptly describes as the "frenetic fiddle" of Jack Smedley.

Two gentler tunes follow in 'Think of Today' and 'The Soft Mist Over All', and then the fiddle gradually increases the pace building to an exuberant level with the addition of the pipes in 'The Grove'. In the final track, 'A Minor Emergency', the flute is allowed its moment to shine.

I could go on to describe all the tracks but there is no substitute for hearing it yourself. I would imagine the band are brilliant in concert as well and you have a chance to catch them over the next couple of weeks. Their tour started in Edinburgh on 9th March and they are heading south for a week, in London on the 24th, then playing for 6 consecutive dates in England, including Cambridge on the 27th, before heading back north to end their tour in Glasgow on 8th April.

You can find details of their tour and other information about Rura's music on their website:

<https://www.rura.co.uk/>