

# 'Stretching Skyward' by Gnoss

Reviewed by Carl Filby



Gnoss are a Scottish band who have been together for a few years now \* and 'Stretching Skyward' is their third album. The members are Aidan Moodie on vocals and acoustic guitar; Graham Rorie on fiddle, mandolin & electric tenor guitar; Connor Sinclair on flute and whistles, and Craig Baxter on bodhran and percussion.

They are joined on this album by Braebach's James Lindsay on electric and double bass.

There is a great opening track, 'Stroma', which illustrates how Gnoss can do all the traditional stuff and present it in an exciting modern style which lifts the spirits immediately and makes the listener look forward with anticipation to the musical journey on which they are about to embark.

Musical journey it is too with lots of variety, something which is apparent in the complete contrast of the second track to the first with a song, 'Hamnavoe', in which I detected a touch of 'Runrig', and so it continues throughout the album. Traditional sounding tunes follow contemporary songs, all written by members of the band with the exception of the final track. At one point I thought I heard what sounded like Marcus Mumford singing the vocal but I think this just demonstrates both the band's quality and versatility.

Another feature of the album is that all the tracks, without exception, are between 3 and 4 minutes long. It is as if they were written with a particular discipline that is perhaps reminiscent of a successful pop song writing team.

I'm pleased to see that some English dates have been added to the band's UK tour most of which takes place in June with a few appearances at festivals in addition.

'Stretching Skyward' is released on May 12<sup>th</sup> and you can find details of the tour and other information about the music of Gnoss on their website: <https://gnossmusic.com/>