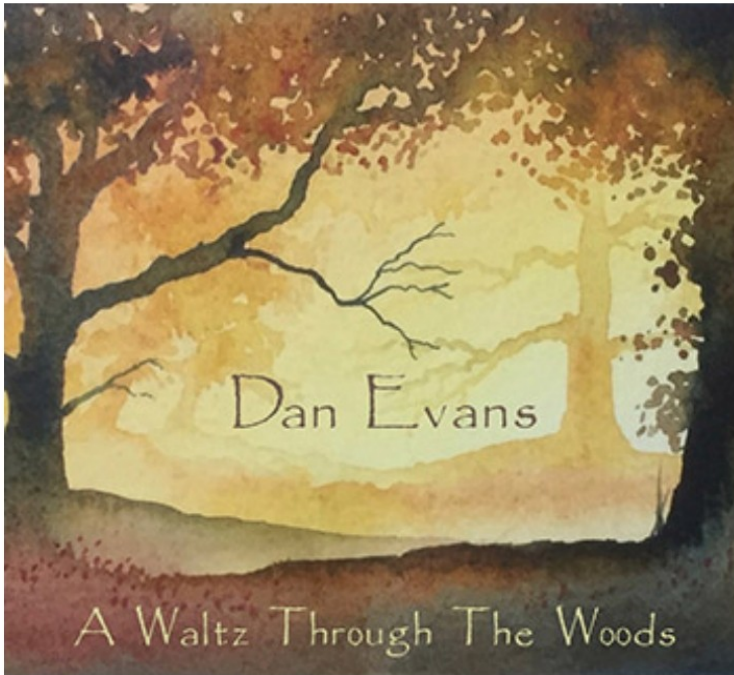


'A Waltz Through The Woods' by Dan Evans

Reviewed by Carl Filby (November 2024)



This is Dan Evans' 6th album, the previous one, ***Au Vieux Moulin***, having also been reviewed in the Unicorn Folk magazine by Simon Bailes and included in the CD reviews on this website.

The album was actually released in July but owing to other commitments I have not found time to review it until now so I owe Dan something of an apology for that though in mitigation I have played tracks from it recently on my **Filby's Folk** show on Royston Radio (see below).

The album feels like a project in the sense that Dan himself describes it as having "... been brewing for some time..." and, picking up on the title, "... a waltz around the seasons..." which I think is a nice way of describing the lightness of touch that is the hallmark of the album for me.

What I mean by that is that it is the sort of album that one can put on almost as background music but which nevertheless draws you in, perhaps with certain tunes that appeal, or a sudden seeping into the consciousness of a sense of overall enjoyment which is what really happened to me.

Although it has taken me a while to review the album I have actually played it several times both for the purposes, or at least intent, of reviewing it, as well as for my own enjoyment. That comes I think partly from the mixture of waltzes, traditional folk songs or tunes, covers and new compositions by Dan, on all of which are stamped the distinctive 'fingerstyle' playing of the dulcimer.

I won't attempt to comment in detail on the dulcimer playing simply for want of knowledge, but it is an instrument that I have always liked since I first really became aware of it when listening to Strawbs albums many years ago. As I recall, Dave Cousins used to play the dulcimer in a 'strumming' style which I certainly enjoyed within the setting of the Strawbs' music but Dan's fingerstyle has a much cleaner and more distinctive sound which is attractive in a different way.

Dan is joined again by English actress and classically trained singer Rebecca Hallworth on vocals which, I think, are the perfect accompaniment to Dan's playing style and the crystal

clear recording produced by Angus Wallace at Far Heath Studios in Northamptonshire. Previous collaborator, international Jazzman Andy Crowdy joins Dan again on bass, guitar and percussion and violinist Sharon Sullivan completes the line up.

The CD comes in a traditional 2-sided (recycled) cardboard container sleeve, one of which contains the CD and the other an eight-sided booklet with a minimal comment from Dan on each tune but containing the essential information about the tunes, their origin and contributions from whichever musicians are involved. The cover artwork reflecting the theme of nature in some of the songs and tunes is by Yorkshire artist Ian Scott Massie who, coincidentally, is also a dulcimer player,

I think this album would make a nice Christmas present, partly because of the wide range of music which is likely to contain “something for everyone” a hope that Dan himself expresses in the sleeve notes. Also, because it has a similar feel to the sort of choral music that is popular at Christmas. More information about the album, how to buy it and Dan’s music can be found on his website: <https://www.english-dulcimer.com>

You can also listen to two tracks from the album on podcast 70 of my **Filby’s Folk** show which can be found [HERE](#) on this website and I’m sure that I will be playing more tracks from the album on my Christmas shows on [Royston Radio](#).
