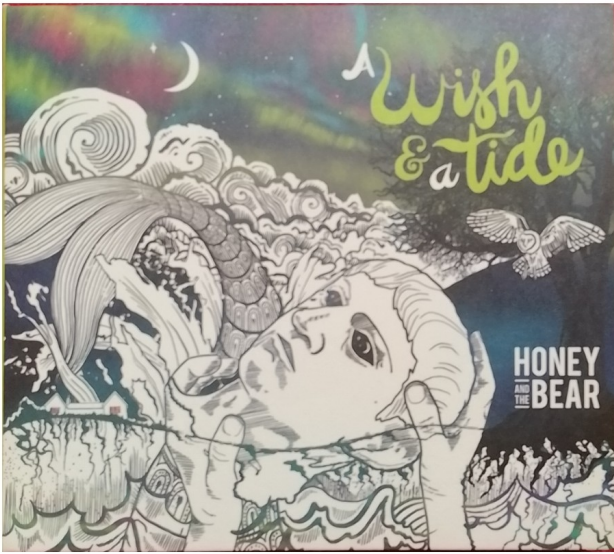


'A wish & a tide' by Honey and The Bear

Reviewed by Carl Filby (April 2026)



This is the fourth album from Suffolk based husband and wife team Lucy Hart and Jon Hart who perform under the name **Honey and The Bear** now well known in folk clubs around East Anglia and the South East and increasingly on the national folk scene. It's also the third time that Unicorn Folk has had the pleasure of reviewing one of their albums which in itself is a record.

As I, and probably many others, have remarked previously the 'Suffolk based' bit is important because many of their songs reflect the landscape, people, folklore and the sea which form an integral part of their home county and *A wish & a tide* is no different in that respect.

The cover of the album is an illustration by Lucy which includes the bronze life-size head of the Emperor Claudius discovered in 1907 by two boys from Rendham in Suffolk on the banks of the River Alde. That area of the country has a mystical quality typified perhaps by the Anglo Saxon burial site at Sutton Hoo, especially on a windless summer's day with the occasional cotton wool cloud scudding across a wide blue sky that seems to extend back into the recesses of time.

The music of Honey and The Bear is a bit like that as well with it's references to the finding of the bronze head which was thought to have been hacked from a statue of Claudius in Colchester when that city was sacked by Boudicca the best part of two millenniums earlier. By contrast, the opening track **Close To The Edge** embraces the more mystical side of Suffolk legends with its look at the world through the eyes of a merman. Coincidentally, *Close To The Edge* is probably my very favourite track by prog rock band **Yes** from their 1972 album of the same name and is also perhaps the most immediately engaging track on this album, not least because of the influence of the flute played by the brilliant multi-instrumentalist Toby Shaer who is also a part of the talented band that now regularly accompany Lucy and Jon on their concert tours.

The album does benefit from the presence of a number of talented musicians in addition to Toby Shaer, including Archie Churchill-Moss (Diatonic Button Accordion), Evan Carson (Percussion, Bodhran) and Graham Coe (Cello) with the first two being credited by Jon and Lucy for their help in shaping the tunes. Jon recorded and mixed the songs and of course he and Lucy are also talented musicians playing a combination of guitars, bouzouki, shaker, double bass and even glockenspiel, all of which go into the mix and contribute to the variety of tunes underpinning the stories.

Accompanying the CD version of the album is a booklet with all the song lyrics and an explanation of where the inspiration for the songs came from which I always find adds greatly to the enjoyment of an album and in this case provides a brief insight into the social, historical and mystical nature of the county of Suffolk.

As with any music that has any depth to it, the songs grow on you and what are my favourites on the album now may be replaced by a greater appreciation of other numbers, and apart from the opening track there are already a few others that are standing out for me after a few plays. In their order on the album, **What's Left For Wishing** is both a celebration of the natural phenomena that is the Aurora Borealis and the joy that sharing the sight of it brings; **Cruel Mistress** portrays the potential cruelty of the sea, in this case related to the coastal erosion taking place in Suffolk which is ruining lives; **Everything Will Be Ok** is an expression of love and caring for someone close, and **Be Still** is focused

on the experience of loss and intended to provide comfort in the aftermath. The last two in particular are beautifully sung and the instrumentation chimes harmoniously with the lyrics, though that description could equally be applied to all the other songs on the album.

In summary, it's a lovely album full of sadness and joy which lifts up your spirits with one song and brings you gently down with another, but always making you think and reflect on life's interests and the challenges of being human.

You will be able to listen to a track or two from the album in the next edition of '[Filby's Folk](#)' (Show 116) which is due out any day now and the album is officially released on 23rd April.

Honey and The Bear are touring during during April including Cambridge Junction on the 22nd and have more dates around the country from the middle of May. You can purchase a copy of the album and check out gig details and more information about the band on their website <https://honeyandthebear.co.uk> and they are of course 'listed' in '[Gigs & Tours](#)' on this website.
