

Kirsty McGee & The Hobopop Collective ~ The Deafening Sound Of Stars

October 11th

Hobopop Recordings



'Rich, versatile and immaculately controlled' Americana UK

'Bewitching, exquisite and skeletal' Q

★★★★

album: <https://promo.theorchard.com/xgqd3nKMU3pc7G1bR4Se> (private)

video: https://youtu.be/bfv_3JOFYak (unlisted)

Over the course of 18 years, Kirsty McGee's songwriting and performing has taken her through 13 countries and from the Arctic to the Mojave desert. It's a fitting journey which doubtless helped create her self coined definition of 'hobopop' - music with no fixed home.

Citing influences such as Louis Armstrong, Lhasa De Sela and Sister Rosetta Tharpe, as well as a love for the Great American Songbook, Kirsty is 7 albums into her career having forged links and collaborations along the way with luminaries like veteran producer **John Wood** and New York jazz legend **Marc Ribot**.

Her debut album Honeysuckle won her a nomination for Best Newcomer at the **BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards in 2003**. Her second album, Frost, followed this up in 2005 with a nomination for Best Original Song (Coffee Coloured Strings). In 2007 she formed her own label Hobopop Recordings, releasing the Americana-tinged Kansas Sessions in 2008. It was from this album that her song, Sandman was featured in **Danny Boyle's** film, **Trance** (2013).

Kirsty and long-term collaborator and then-partner Mat Martin formed the band The Hobopop Collective in 2009. Featuring guests from a cross section of musical fields, band members have included Nick Blacka and Rob Turner of Bluenote-signed Go Go Penguin, Karine Polwart, Inge Thomson, Nick Walters and Christopher Cundy.

Drawing on old vinyl blues, gospel, '30s jazz, Brechtian ballads and Brill Building sensibilities, Kirsty eschews the lures of genre stereotyping. Constantly striving for new and inspirational backdrops for her soundscapes, The Deafening Sound Of Stars sees the release of 14 new songs as well as a limited edition 'sister' record of field recordings made in Italy last summer.

Having fallen into a steady rhythm of bi-yearly releases, *Stars* is the first album to break that pattern, Kirsty describing it as particularly difficult to pin down. She began writing the album in a caravan in the Mojave desert in the autumn of 2015, planning to make a series of field recordings inspired by jazz standards. A first attempt to record the songs was made in Arctic Norway in January 2018 and this was followed up by a second pass in Italy later that year.

'We recorded live and without air conditioning in the swamp heat of a humid August. Two days in a wooden cellar by a church whose bells chimed twice on the hour and once at half past, later in a fifteenth century church in the Italian mountains where I kept cool by placing my feet on freezer blocks and sang whilst being feasted on by mosquitoes in 40 degree heat.'

Recorded in Leeds UK, the final incarnation of the album features Kirsty's full band that includes players from Beats & Pieces Big Band, Richard Hawley's band and arrangements inspired by Mulatu Astatke and Tom Waits. The bigger arrangements create an album that's cinematic in its musical scope and that delights in exploring musical colour, shape and form.

Many singer songwriters fall by the wayside ... the sheer volume of 'traffic' is often the reason. While sometimes it's nice to be a gloriously well-guarded secret, Kirsty has surely earned her stripes and with this latest work, her 8th album and first full length work since 2014's *Those Old Demons*, perhaps she can reap even greater rewards.

A couple of years ago, at 3 in the morning, two songwriters collided in a seventh floor corridor at the Crown Westin Hotel, Kansas City Missouri. One was noticeable for his large beard and the other was a woman carrying a musical saw. This year, for the first time and for a limited run of shows, these two artists Kirsty McGee (UK) and Ben Bedford (US) will be touring and collaborating together.

Kirsty McGee only dates

30th August Atlantic Island Centre, Isle of Luing, Scotland

31st August, Isle of Seil, Scotland

4th September Aros, Portree, Isle of Skye

6th September Eyemouth Hippodrome

Kirsty McGee and Ben Bedford's UK October Tour

11th Blue Sky Café, Bangor

12th Upfront Gallery & Puppet Theatre, Hutton in the Forest

13th Nab Cottage, Cumbria

14th Glenfarg Folk Club, Glenfarg, Scotland

16th Stockport Hat Museum, Cheshire

17th Bury Met, Greater Manchester

18th Ancient Technology Centre, Cranborne, Dorset

19th Slader's Yard, Dorset

20th Square & Compass, Dorset 2pm show

22nd Green Note, London
23rd House Concert, Arundel
25th Laxfield, Suffolk

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