

"Traditional yet innovative" - Irish Music Magazine

"A true pleasure" - Fiddler Magazine

"Tradition taken in a new direction" - Halifax Presents

"Brings Cape Breton to the world, and vice versa" - Celtic Life International Magazine

"Unpretentious, grounded, with a sense of history that is never precious..." - The Living Tradition UK

CD REVIEW - The Living Tradition (UK), December 2021

BRAD REID

NEW Scotland

Private Label BRM03

When I received my copy of this CD, and read "...fiddle meets Dr Dre tunes where you might wanna get the subwoofer goin' in the Toyota Corolla, rollin' downtown, shootin' the drag..." I was somewhat taken aback. Am I getting too old for this? However, I was delighted to discover there were no sharp shocks for oldies like me. Brad Reid hails from Nova Scotia, one of my favourite places on the planet, and this CD underscores what I love about the place. It's unpretentious, grounded, with a sense of history that is never precious. The older material sits quite comfortably beside newer offerings.

The album showcases Brad's fiddle on most of the cuts - a fiddle that is confident and unhurried, even on the dance tunes, and very much provides the dominant 'voice' of the whole album. Behind the fiddle is some very effective percussion, provided by (apparently) Brad's high-top Russian boots (!) along with congas, bodhrán and "other percussion". Filling in the musical background are guitar and double bass, which enhance but don't compete with Brad's authoritative fiddle. Brad provides effective vocals on two cuts - the Gaelic, *Fonn Air Mo Mháiri Loghaich*, and some VERY intricate mouth music on *Lucy Campbell & Sandy Cameron* which could easily be danced to if there were no instruments (besides Russian boots) to be had.

I have two particular favourite cuts. One is *Northumberland Shores*, one of Brad's own compositions. It's a haunting, slow tune that would be perfect for lyrics, if he should ever be moved to write some. This singable tune certainly deserves to become popular. And *The Hector* is also a favourite tune of mine. The track employs what could be a clichéd gimmick - the sound of waves breaking on the shore - but the sound of those waves is totally effective here. The Hector was, of course, the tiny ship that sailed from Loch Broom to Pictou in 1773, filled to the brim with settlers who had been cleared from their highland homes. They arrived on Nova Scotia's shore to many hardships, but this stately, cheery tune captures their indomitable spirit. They kept going in the teeth of adversity, and never forgot where they came from.

Never forgetting where his people came from is what, apparently, motivated Brad to make this CD. He's done himself and his heritage proud.

www.bradreid.ca

Jan Foley
The Living Tradition (UK)
The magazine for traditional folk music

CD REVIEW - Fiddler Magazine, Summer 2021
Brad Reid - NEW Scotland

Reid takes the rules and standards of Cape Breton fiddling and puts them into different situations with this disc. He definitely knows his stuff on the fiddle, and mixes that knowledge with backing rhythms and instrumentation from jazz, modern acoustic pop, and even a bit of Afro-Cuban stylings. An excellent example is the opening cut, "Trip to Peggy's Cove," in which Reid works the Scottish fiddle with congas and syncopated rhythm guitar. "Glasgow Gate" moves in that same direction, with the fiddle working a recognizable pattern against varied time signatures. However, he never wants to lose his fan base, and sticks to more traditional arrangements with "King George" and "Hills of Glenorchy." The overall production is full-sounding with sparse instrumentation. This is a true pleasure album for anyone wanting to hear someone "fiddling around a bit" with traditional Cape Breton music. – Matt Merta

CD REVIEW - Irish Music Magazine
(March 2021)

www.irishmusicmagazine.com

BRAD REID

NEW Scotland

Own Label, 15 Tracks, 55 Minutes www.bradreid.ca

Nova Scotia based multi-instrumentalist and in particular on this album a fiddle and bass player, Brad Reid celebrates ancestral Scottish music in New Scotland, an album of tunes, songs and lilt, his sound primarily rooted in the Scottish tradition with lots of other influences allowed in. Reid's unique, modern day interpretation of music that originated with Scottish highland clearances, other migratory patterns and waves of Scottish settlements in Canada is a happy bounce, enabled by strong musicianship and arrangements. There's a rich panoply of rhythmic dance tunes, timely playing, excellent in pitch and phrasing. From a geographically close, culturally similar region, Northumberland Shores is a delightful tune, hints of nostalgia in the soft melody. Hills of Glenorchy is a rouser, with Brad foremost on fiddle, Dave Mac Isaac's guitar superbly rhythmic, a compelling dance tune, the Braes of Dunvegan also a lively evocation to dance and Glasgow Gate traditional yet innovative. This culturally significant recording which connects the tangled paths of his emigrant ancestors to his own passion for their music is a fine harmonic soundscape, great variety and a few surprises, like the rare treat in a contemporary CD, a lilt track. Reid lilt two reels, the very popular Irish tune Lucy

Campbell's followed by Sandy Cameron's. With very effective foot-tapping percussion, his vocal ornamentation is excellent, his range well suited. This is a unique album, traditional Scottish with a good dollop of jazz, classical, modern music and a stellar line up of accompanists; solid guitar and double bass backing by Mac Isaac and Jamie Gatti, adding great depth, as does the steady pulse of Tom Roach's congas.

Seamus Heaney said 'the love of place and lamentation against exile from a cherished territory is a typical strain in the Celtic sensibility', applicable to the impetus behind and journey motifs Brad Reid chose for this fine album. - Anne Marie Kennedy
