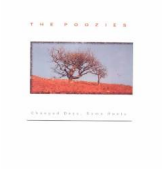
The Poozies - Changed Days, Same Roots (2003)



1 Tam 2 Ged Is Grianach An Latha ('Sunny') 3 The Great Debate 4 All I Want 5 Augustus Gloop 6 Rosa 7 Lila 8 Daniel's Potatoes 9 Throw the Ball 10 Gertrude 11 Paddy Eilidh Shaw - Fiddle, Mixing, Vocals Karen Tweed – Piano, Accordian, Vocals (Background) Patsy Seddon - electro-harp, clarsach, fiddle, vocals Mary MacMaster - electro-harp, clarsach, vocals

It's been four years since these mistresses of Celtic and world folk have graced the shelves of your local emporium with a new release. 2000's compilation, Raise Your Head, seemed to draw a neat line under the period that ended when Kate Rusby's brief membership elapsed. However, too long a gap would undoubtedly have had folk historians simplistically consigning the Poozies as mere footnotes in Rusby's now stellar career. This album should put the record straight once more.

The long gap between recordings is easily explained when you realise that all the Poozies have many irons in the fire:For example, accordionist Karen Tweed has been busy with her teaching duties in Newcastle University's exemplary folk course,working with fellow accordionist Andy Cutting and touring with Swap! Yet, perhaps wisely, the ladies have taken their time to let newest member Eilidh Shaw settle into her role as the band's fiddler. Perfectly complementing founder members Patsy Seddon and Mary McMaster's shimmering harp work and Tweed's mercurial way with the squeezebox; Eilidh's addition to the fold may prove to have been a masterstroke. Changed Days...is a really great album.

Each track reflects the overall vibe. It's a smorgasbord of influences and styles tastefully chosen, often within the space of one track, for the most pleasing combinations. Original compositions blend perfectly with traditional and classic tunes. We get Lerner and Loewe's "All I

Want" combined with Tweed's own marvellous instrumental "Midnight Mead". We get the Swedish folk of "Haveropolska efter Jok Jonas" blended with Shaw's "Tam the Banjo". From New Zealand to Paris via Poland and Shetland - there are no geographical sources ignored in their ongoing quest for fine Celtic music in all its guises and permutations.

Of course the real core of the Poozies' appeal is their way with a reel. Rarely do you get to hear such wild interplay between harp, fiddle and accordion. And such is the combined knowledge of all four members that material as good as Mary McMaster's "Red Jacket" and Shaw's "Paddy" (featured in the medley "Paddy") already sound like standards waiting for others' interpretations. Yet With Mary, Patsy and Eilidh all sharing lead vocals the quieter numbers never fail to touch the heart. "Rosa" (featuring exquisite harmonies from all members) deserves a special mention for its crystal clear beauty.

After ten years this is a band at the height of its powers. Forget their prestigious past. The future looks very bright for the Poozies. ---Chris Jones, BBC Review

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