

PAT WALSH

Simply Whistle

Pat Walsh Simply Whistle CD

Bunowen Music BUN001

[www.patwalshwhistle.com](http://www.patwalshwhistle.com)

\*\*\*\*\* FIVE STAR CHOICE! \*\*\*\*\*

Pat Walsh has been part of the Manchester music scene for 50 years and is acclaimed as one of the city's best whistle players and composers. She is highly regarded by Northern musicians and Ireland, too – renowned Manchester fiddler Emma Sweeney, Cheshire's Tony Sullivan, County Mayo fiddler Julie Langan and whistler Marian Flannery Egan from Kilkelly have all queued up to salute her. Exhilarating musician Mike McGoldrick has masterfully produced her debut album and accompanies her on flute, whistles, mandola, tenor guitar and bodhràn; the wonderful John Doyle is there, playing guitar, bouzouki and mandola, and Tim Edey adds his unmistakable guitar. Marian Egan (whistle), Pat O'Reilly (bouzouki) and Stephen Doherty (piano) complete the list, which leads you to imagine that all the 19 tracks will be a gigantic hooley – but Pat's bright and sparkling whistle shines through, and the only addition is just one or maybe two sessioners.

If you mistakenly supposed that a lowly whistle wouldn't last a whole album out – well, I wouldn't bet on it! Emma says that Pat “has a lovely way of bringing music to life, with meticulous thought given to every tune she chooses to play – be it a trad piece or one of her own compositions.” She leaps into the opening ‘The Teacake Reel’ / ‘The Bellydancer’, enhanced with John Doyle's imperceptible magic – and by the time that the second track (‘The Forgotten Fling’ / ‘Miss Galvin's’) is finished, you're totally hooked. Pat dances through ‘Baby Matthew's Jig’ / ‘Emmet's Hedgehog’, and solos on ‘Humours of Whiskey’ / ‘Seamus Ennis' Lark In The Morning’; and she duets with Mike's flute on the reel ‘Tie The Bonnet’ – it's just fabulous.

The surprises just keep on coming. Pat executes a deft whistle duet with Marian Egan on ‘Mister McDermott's’ / ‘Taylor's Fancy’; Stephen Doherty is on the piano. John Doyle is quietly stunning in ‘The Lost Jig’ / ‘The Box Man’, but it's Tim Edey's beautiful guitar on ‘Kissing Cousins’ / ‘John Sindt's Favourite’ that really makes Pat blossom and grow. I could rave about the whole 19 tracks, blended into an amazing two score tunes; all her little delights are absolutely golden, and it's the way she maintains a steady timing while skipping and floating butterfly-style that really knocks me sideways and wins my heart. Good on you, Pat!