

Adiós Nonino' – as well as Horacio Salgán's playful 'A Fuego Lento', two meditative instrumentals of Gardel standards, and three of their own compositions. The mix works well, and the duo's chemistry is tangible in intimate, almost conversational arrangements – far mellower than anything you'd hear in, say, Piazzolla's last quintet. It usually takes more than two instruments to tango, and Stefano's piano has to work hard at times. Iorio's bandoneón isn't as strident as it might be and those after a passionate Buenos Aires-style tango might feel a lack here. But there's immense virtuosity, plus a vivacious talent honed through years of live performance; *Nocturno* is a more-than-worthy update of the European tango repertoire.

CHRIS MOSS

TRACK TO TRY *Invierno Porteño*

Ruth Keggin Turrys

Part Sheeran Records (40 mins)

★★★★★

Manx-language musical mission statement



Singer Ruth Keggin is a committed campaigner for the Manx language and her debut album *Sheear*

(reviewed in #108), featuring traditional and contemporary songs from the Isle of Man, was something of a victorious, two-fingered musical salute to UNESCO, who were forced to change their classification of the Manx language from 'extinct' following protests from some of the estimated 1,700 Manx speakers. *Aon Teanga: Un Chengey* (reviewed in #115), her album collaboration with Scottish Gaelic singer and broadcaster Mary Ann Kennedy and Irish *sean-nós* singer Eoghan Ó Ceannabháin celebrated Scots, Irish and Manx Gaelic having once been one tongue. But on *Turrys* she sings almost exclusively in Manx (with English translations given in the liner notes).

Contemporary compositions from Manx musician and scholar Bob Corteen Carswell, such as lilting opener 'Irree ny Greiney' (Sunrise) as well as composer and poet Annie Kissack's 'Mish as y Keayn' (Me and the Sea) blend seamlessly with traditional Manx melodies, while 'Little Red Bird in the Pines' emphasises to startling effect the parallels between Manx traditional song 'Ushag Veg Ruy' (Little Red Bird) and the old American folk song 'In the Pines', which Keggin

Manx singer Ruth Keggin



She Murray

first heard sung by Kurt Cobain for Nirvana's live version.

KEVIN BOURKE

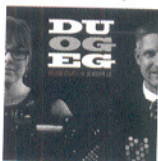
TRACK TO TRY *Little Red Bird in the Pines*

Ingunn Stræte Lie & Jo Asgeir Lie Du og Eg

Kvarts Records (46 mins)

★★★★★

An album that will put a real springer in your step



By the end of this album you'll know your reinlanders from your springars, and polkas will be

second nature. Here's a very welcome addition to the accordion canon from two highly revered performers, both of whom studied folk music at the Norwegian Academy of Music. Jo Asgeir Lie grew up in Voss, up in the mountains. Ingunn Stræte Lie, who is also an award-winning folk dancer, hails from Hallingdal, another Norwegian melting pot of traditions. The duo clearly have enormous fun bringing Norwegian dance tunes together with Swedish polkas.

The title *Du og Eg* means 'You and I' and reflects the music that has surrounded their lives, demonstrating a remarkable spirit of togetherness. 'Reinlander av Ola Fauske' is an elegant tune played with careful phrasing and dynamic contrasts. 'Snøkrystallen' is as delicate as snowflakes but has an underlying sense of fun. And if you really want to find your dancing feet, then try 'Eklundapolska Nr3', a tune the pair heard from the legendary Swedish band Väsen: it's a perfect, breathless challenge.

FIONA TALKINGTON

TRACK TO TRY *Du Og Eg i Verda*

Litvakus Raysn: The Music of Jewish Belarus

Litvakus Records (65 mins)

★★★★★

New Yorkers revive the repertoire of the Litvak Jews



This New York-based band are exploring the Jewish music of Belarus and its surrounds. The

Jewish culture of the region was immortalised in the early paintings of Marc Chagall, but hasn't been widely researched, which is why this album is so welcome. The band take their name from the Litvak Jews, which is how the Jews of Lithuania were known. Bandleader Dmitri Zisl Slepovitch sings Yiddish vocals, plays idiomatic clarinet and emigrated from Belarus to New York in 2008. He's conducted valuable research into historic collections, more recent material gathered by musicologists Inna Nazina (from Belarus) and Andrzej Bienkowski (Poland) and Byelorussian folk music. Many pieces here have a simple drone accompaniment – as in the atmospheric opening track 'Freylekhs and Kolomeyke'.

But, however deep the research, a project like this only works if the musicianship is good, which it is. Litvakus have a five-piece acoustic line-up with clarinets, fiddle, accordion, double bass and folk drum. The repertoire ranges from dance tunes and songs to Hasidic spiritual pieces and even a couple of tunes composed on the New York subway, taking the Q train between Brooklyn and Manhattan. An extremely welcome arrival on the Jewish music scene.

SIMON BROUGHTON

TRACK TO TRY *Freylekhs and Kolomeyke*

Paride Peddio & Jonathan Della Marianna Brinca

Felmay (63 mins)

★★★★★

Pipes, flutes and melodeon: the Sardinia many never hear



It is both odd and a real shame that Sardinia's richly vibrant traditional music culture isn't better known

internationally. But anyone that hasn't yet got wind of how young Sardinian musicians have reinvigorated their own roots music scenes with virtuosic flair could start by jumping – *brincare* means 'to jump' in the Sardinian language – straight into this hugely accomplished debut by top-flight exponents of two instruments commonly and distinctively heard in Sardinian folk music.

There are flutes and the archaic drone and dancing counter-melodies of the *launeddas* – the triple-pipe unique to this island culture – courtesy of Jonathan Della Marianna. Paride Peddio's melodeon is another typically Sardinian sound, played with a masterfully precise grasp of tight triple-time dance rhythms, which relax somewhat on the popular ballad 'A Diosa' featuring singer Beppe Dettori. There are also guests on Jew's harp, acoustic guitar and harmonica, plus singer Elena Ledda, who tears through 'Ballitu Cantau' with all the majesty you'd expect from a woman widely considered to have the most beautiful voice in Sardinia.

JON LUSK

TRACK TO TRY *Ballitu Cantau*

Alasdair Roberts & James Green Plaint of Lapwing

Clay Pipe Music (45 mins) VINYL & DIGITAL ONLY

★★★★★

Visionary folkie unveils secret weapon: the harmoniflute



Alasdair Roberts has a busy and productive muse – with a long line of striking solo records behind

him, recent collaborations with the likes of Scottish poet Robin Robertson and a second album in the offing with The Furrow Collective. *Plaint of Lapwing* is a new vinyl set with Sheffield musician James Green, who plays an instrument called the harmoniflute, which sounds like something between a harmonium ▶