

Calanais

By

Lissa-Käthe

Written by

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It's been too long since we have heard from the lovely **Lissa-Käthe**; she was a onetime presenter on OWMR with her show *Souls Australis* and of course released her debut album *Satori* back in 2012. However she is now back with a brand new release, this time the focus is on the harp and her Celtic musings

So let's take a voyage across the seas with Lissa and take in the sights and sounds of a Celtic journey through her latest work **Calanais**. We start our journey with the piece entitled **The Sprite**, I have no idea why, but this track reminds me in energy of the *Tarot* card, the *Fool*. That card is about beginning a new journey and here Käthe does just that with a delicacy of performance and some delightful percussion, namely on the Bodhran.

She now follows that up with the next offering called **Kun Mun Kultani Tulisi**; a *Finish* song which I believe may translate to something like *Shall My Darling Come*. **Lissa-Käthe's** performance here is really deep and imploring, the percussion, including bells is beautifully partnered by her magical Harp.

We now move to a piece called **Gröne Lunden**; the artist moves location slightly with this offering and gives us a Swedish chant. The wooden recorder was absolutely perfect for setting the scene, while the Bodhran set a delightful tempo that made this piece really colourful to listen to, the graphic nature of this composition created images of a meeting place for lovers with ease.

One of the most vibrant and sun kissed pieces off this album is this one called **Amaryllis**. I adored the lightness of touch on Harp by the artist and the percussion worked so well with the accordion and synth flutes, that it created a real segway to the next composition entitled **Spinning Song**.

Once you listen to this I'm pretty sure you going to say to yourself that it seems somewhat familiar. **Spinning Song** is of course a traditional folk song that I believe originates from the *Shetland Isles*. Just to show you how to craft an album perfectly, the artist even feature an actual spinning wheel within this track that you can enjoy as a scene setter.

We now approach the half way mark and come across another short form composition called **Drummond Castle**. The gentle jig is named after the castle in *Perth*. There is also a certain assertiveness and confidence about this performance that deserves multiple listens.

So we can now gaze down into the valley of the last half of the album while we listen to the vocals and Harp of the artist on this next piece called **Twa Corbies**. This is a reflective and quite dark song that mixes a tale of sadness, and combines it with some absolutely excellent performances and multi instrumentational brilliance, it was also good to hear a 12 string guitar again; something not used that much now in this genre.

There is a real sense of movement within this next piece called **Stac Pollaidh**. **Lissa-Käthe's** fond memories of rock climbing in Scotland can be found within this melody, but also you can feel the longing of the artist to be back there again. Now through this repeating motif and quite ambient offering that desire can be met through the music.

An old *Robert Burns* ballad is now recanted through the track **Leezie Lyndsey**. There is a delightful energy about this piece, which is so addictive, the artist has taken this song and brought it right up to date, and through the multi instrumentational nature of the performance she has created an extra dimension for us to roam within.

Now here is one that will raise the rhythms, it's called **Celtic Wind on the Ring of Steall**. The symbiotic nature of this track and the minor nature of the arrangement are a story teller's delight. The Ring of Steall is around the *Ben Nevis* area and one can feel through the energy of this track and its addictive tempo, the true passion of the moment, this is vibrant Celtic music at its very best.

There is a deep resonance in this next one that can almost be touched; it is called **Ferry to Stornoway**. This is a very delicate offering, the ethereal vocals conjure up misty waters and a mesmeric ocean, as only the sea can be. Through Käthe's

performance one can really see the artist has given this her all and draws a compelling narrative of her journey.

We're finally here, the voyage has been long and exciting and we now stand before the **Calanais Stones** themselves. **Lissa-Käthe** literally takes us with her to this mystical location, the brightness and colourful positive lyrics really show the delight of the moment she experienced, and now we can be there with her. I could indeed see this one as being released as a single; this is also my personal favourite piece off the release too.

So now it is time for the penultimate offering from the album called **Sacred Ground**, the respectful nature of this track is really time worn, one can feel through it that there is a real longing to carry that respect on through the generations, a sense of a real home can also be found here too. This fine instrumental offering is so charming and completely honest in its construction.

Driftwood as a composition speaks for us all, for all our journeys must end at some stage, the artist sojourn in the Celtic isles has now come to a close, but for her and now for us, those memories and musical stories will last for as long as we wish. This gentle slice of Harp by **Lissa-Käthe** is simply the perfect end to a really lovely album.

I sense the artist really needed to create this album, for me I would say it was a true labour of love for her and one that has now been completed. Now that this tapestry of musical storytelling has been fulfilled, we too can always gaze back upon this moment, we can revel once more in the gentleness of a sublime performance on Harp by the artist, and follow her on the path at any time we wish, for this is one of the best journeys in music I have heard for quite some time.

Calanais by **Lissa-Käthe** is a sublime album, a fine collection of smooth and peace filled tracks, constructed out of a memory of a time, when she was who she really wanted to be, free and uncomplicated with the winds of nature as her constant companion, a splendid release indeed.