

Jack Harris - The Flame And The Pelican (2011)

Written by bluelover

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1. *The Rehearsal* 2. *Potato Flower* 3. *Easter Morning* 4. *Rider* 5. *Big Umbrella* [play](#) 6. *Red Weather* 7. *Sylvia Plath's Lullaby* 8. *Tea Meeting* 9. *Wedding Dentures* 10. *Donegal* [play](#)

Musicians: Jack Harris – guitar Sean Mac Labhair - tin whistle, flute Simon Pedley - tin whistle Tom Mann – piano Lynn Flanagan – harp Harry Mead – drums Ellen Harris – harmony, vocals

With this latest release by Welsh-born singer-songwriter Jack Harris, the follow up to his 2006 debut *BROKEN YELLOW*, we find ten mellow songs, each beautifully crafted and each in turn treated to an assured finger-picked guitar style and gentle vocal. Gaining a reputation as a fine literate and compassionate writer and performer, being the first international act to win the New Folk songwriting competition at The Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas, which is in itself no mean feat, Jack Harris appears to be finding his place in a music that straddles continents. Not only has his name been added to a list that includes Steve Earle, Gillian Welch, Lyle Lovett and Devon Sproule but it has ensured new audiences throughout the UK, USA and Europe, both as an outstanding support artist or indeed headlining his own shows.

There's a sense of mystery in much of his songwriting, similar in fact to some of Eric Taylor's material, the Texan singer-songwriter who produced Harris's debut record. Lyrically poetic, the songs reference both Lowell and Plath in *The Rehearsal*, from which the album's title derives and the utterly haunting *Sylvia Plath's Lullaby*, which maintains this air of mystery surrounding the poet, concluding with the notion that it's better that we don't actually know. There's further references to the American poetry world in one or two dedications, *The Rehearsal* being dedicated to Elizabeth Bishop and *Red Weather* being dedicated to Wallace Stevens. --- Allan Wilkinson, allanwilkinson.co.uk

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