

🎸 **Trad.Attack! Trad.Attack!** (Own label, no cat no). Folk-rock breaks out in Estonia. Viljandi trio with celtoid thrum-twangy twelve-string guitar, drum kit, bagpipes, whistle, jew's harp; vocals largely clips from Estonian trad music archives. Energy, visual attitude, but only becomes a real band, with its own vocals, on mildly Hedningarna-ish last track of five-track EP. www.tradattack.ee

🎸 **Amagong Amagong** (Own label LC 05699). One piece here is called *Handel With Care*, and given their big acronym-ready band name – Association Mélomane des Amis du Grand Orchestre National de Gondwana – you get the idea. A fusion of West African and Swiss that has soul, keeps time well and tastes good. amagong.com

🎸 **Ellie Rose Rusbridge Night Becoming** (Own label, no cat no). Intelligent, romantic and autobiographical lyrics, sung over late-night piano arrangements, sometimes enhanced by clarinet and / or tasteful drums and guitar. Hugely talented, but lacking any discernible core *fR* influence. "I have listened to Hejira..." she sings. That'll be it, then. ellieroserusbridge.com

🎸 **Paul Lamb & The Kingsnakes Hole In The Wall** (Secret Records SECCD097). Yet another fine musical blast from one of UK's hardest-working and ever-inventive blues-based bands. Eight originals from Paul (and various band members) sit happily alongside the seven covers all expertly played with the band's usual panache. www.secretrecordslimited.com

🎸 **Stern John Rope EP** (Own label, no cat no). Four-song, lo-fi EP by acoustic English troubadour, who addresses gender and class politics with direct vocals, a straightforward guitar and banjo style, and rhymes "exploitation" with "creeping resignation". Not the Trinidadian former Birmingham City and Southampton footballer. paulofford@hotmail.co.uk

🎸 **Various Artists Ain't It The Truth – The Ric & Ron Story Volume 2** (Ace CDCHD 1416). 24 more groovy tracks from the vaults of the New Orleans based Ric and Ron labels that were active for only a short span (1959-1963) but which produced some great sounding soulful R&B records with such artists as Johnny Adams, Eddie Bo, Tommy Ridgley, and Barbara Lynn. www.acerecords.com

🎸 **Sefo Kanuteh Together** (Own label, no cat no). A sell-on-gigs only album which disqualifies it from full review. However, this Gambian domiciled in the UK doubled-tracked on kora and balafon here and singing beautifully is clearly an emerging major talent. Remember the name and look out for the promised proper album release next year. www.facebook.com/pages/Sefo-kanuteh-and-Meriya/516985211657740

🎸 **Pekka Nättinen Usein Kasvoin** (Own label PET100). He's holding a ten-string kan-tele on the sleeve, but it's just one of many acoustic and electric instruments densely studio-layered-up in busy jazzy-swung instrumentals and a song. Problem is, his compositions they're layered up on aren't notably interesting. pekka.nattinen@gmail.com

🎸 **Mick & Sarah Graves With Colin Heviside The Greg Trice Tune Book** (Own label MSGCD014). Two long-established stalwarts of the folk scene play the superb dance tune compositions of a deceased friend. The subtle supportive piano accompaniments neatly augment the excellent playing of the two multi-instrumentalists. Dance bands – this is a good source of tunes! www.sarahgraves.co.uk

🎸 **The Hot Seats Grandad's Favorite** (Own label, no cat no). Accomplished and exuberant old-time American string band quartet from Richmond, Virginia. Good feel to the recording and they deliver their vocals without the self-consciousness that often plagues the genre. Great fun. www.thehotseats.net

🎸 **The Old Dance School Steer In The Night Live** (Transition TRANSCD09). TODS are already brewing up more studio wonders, while this document of development so far proves that on stage they're even more inventive than their albums promise. Loads of improvisation, free form and twin fiddle lines, exploration guaranteed. www.transition-records.com

🎸 **Skullthuggery Skullthuggery** (Rowdy Fargo RFSTO11). Punk pirates anyone, heavy metal on the galleons? No thanks, I'd rather walk the plank. No yo ho! But then, pirates from Peterborough? The prosecution rests m'Lord. www.destructors.co.uk

🎸 **Kevin MacLeod Highland Strands** (Birnham, BEAGCD003). A must-have for mandolinistas and bouzoukinis! Kevin plays Scottish traditional music on mandolin, bouzouki, cittern and resonator tenor guitars, accompanied by Luke Plumb (bouzouki & mandolin), Alec Finn (bouzouki), Tim Jones (mandolin), Matheu Watson (guitar) and John Martin (fiddle). www.kevinmacleod.co.uk

🎸 **Aldous Harding Aldous Harding** (Spunk Records). Debut album by New Zealand singer-songwriter specialising in whispery vibrato and references to Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast* novels, accompanied by rather rudimentary guitar with the odd bit of therein spookiness. Probably better experienced in an intimate performance environment. www.spunk.com.au

🎸 **Sound Of Yell Brocken Spectre** (Chemikal Underground CHEM215CD). Wonderfully eccentric acoustic music, composed and performed by Stevie Jones of El Hombre Trajeado, with a supporting cast of Glasgow's alternative music luminaries, including Alasdair Roberts (on hurdy gurdy), Alex Neilson and (Teenage Fanclub's) Norman Blake. Absorbing, original and moving. soundofyell.co.uk

🎸 **James Hill The Old Silo** (Borealis Records 7 73958 12302 1). Canadian singer-songwriter, on the heavy side of country. Writes, sings, plays nearly all the instruments and merits more attention that he will probably get. Very professionally done. Not one of those horrid home-made things. www.borealisrecords.com

🎸 **The Lords Of Thyme The Lords Of Thyme** (Sunstone Records, no cat no). Four track EP by the rapidly-rising stars of pastoral English psychedelia alternates (singer-guitarist) Joe Woolley and traditional folk songs. Standout opener *Park Song*, with its added cello and violin, is a perfect evocation of the hazy Witchseason vibe. www.sunstonerecords.co.uk

The Lords Of Thyme



🎸 **Lizzy Hoyt New Lady On The Prairie** (8 29982 125444 6). Beautifully produced acoustic album, Hoyt's voice may be too pure and sweet for some but she does deliver some well-arranged original songs and plays a few fine fiddle tunes. Special commendation to John Reischman on mandolin and co-producer. www.lizzyhoyt.com

🎸 **The Once Departures** (Nettwerk 0 6700 31024 2). Canadian acoustic-based trio with outstanding vocalist Geraldine Hollett and collection of well-performed original material and a couple of covers finishing with a superb a cappella *Sonny*. A recording that deserves to be heard, particularly *The Nameless Murderer*. Great song. www.theonce.ca

🎸 **Billy Strings & Don Julin Fiddle Tune X** (Own label, no cat no). Bluegrass derived duo playing mostly mandolin and guitar with some good, driving harmony vocals. Unfortunately most of the tunes and songs have been performed a thousand times already and often better. www.billystrings.com

🎸 **Various Artists Strange And Dangerous Times** (Trikont US 0463). To be labelled alt-country, punk country, new-roots or what you like. Brash, sometimes shouted, sometimes tuneful. Sixteen tracks by anonymous, to me, American outfits. Songs and music are often as it says, strange and dangerous. www.trikont.de

🎸 **Various Dubs & Version 1** (Glitterbeat GBDC018). This year's Womex label award-winners shine fresh light on their wares via some (mainly) dub-dripping remixes of some of their stable's finest (Tamikrest, Samba Touré, Ben Zabo, Dirtmusic) from a variety of producers from spacious grooves of Dennis Bovell to lo-fi bleeps of Shangaan Electro's *Nozinja*. The raw material offers a rich playground! www.glitterbeat.com

🎸 **Cocok! Brass Band Here Comes Shlomo** (Own label, no cat no). Enthralled as a young, impressionable high-school trumpeter by the very concept of Fanfare Ciocărlia, Sam Dechenne here presents his rather pensive Balkan brass small band. It's a fine adaptation, at its most interesting when it showcases a decent through road from Serbia to New Orleans. cocok.storyamp.com

🎸 **Threepenny Bit Pantomime Cannon** (Little Folk Records LFR103). Southampton busking-cum-dance outfit's third album, a richly varied palette. Some tunes work better than others; at best it's a rollickin' tootapper though one or two tracks are fluff. However they're out there trying and no doubt sound-tracking every Saturday night hop within 50 miles of Winchester. More power to them. www.threepennybit.com