



Máire BRENNAN
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Mike Schild

WHISPER TO THE WILD WATER

Combining modern twists like electronics with folk music isn't anything new'Enya have been pulling it off for years now'though Maire Brennan makes the formula sound refreshingly novel with *Whisper to the Wild Water*.

Mixing a strong electronic back beat and an electric guitar, giving her music a crisp, modern sensibility, with traditional Celtic touches such as Uilleann pipes, Brennan strikes a tender balance between tradition and innovation with this album. While not sitting statically like straight-up Celtic folk, Brennan draws on the depth and mystery of traditional sounds to create a musical landscape blending the lush green of a rural Irish countryside with the cold neon glow of a large town.

Most striking on this record is Brennan's powerful voice. Better known as the voice of Clannad, Brennan delivers the compelling performance her career was built upon. Simultaneously with enough body and power to strike with gale force and an inviting, near angelic, tender touch, Brennan again proves herself as a front-woman of the highest caliber. From her breathy choruses slipping flawlessly into full-bodied verses on "Follow the Word," to the angelic and haunting "Rinne Tu," Brennan cuts diamond-quality vocal tracks on *Whisper to the Wild Water*. Jumping between Gaelic and English, Brennan creates a cascading waterfall of vocal melodies.

While Brennan's vocal work steals the show on this record, it certainly isn't its sole saving grace. With *Whisper to the Wild Water*'s musical tracks cutting a unique profile, the album proves well rounded. Building up the contrast between its traditional and contemporary influences, this album comes through with songs rich in musical variety. Whether playing up a restrained, though intricate, guitar melody in the title track, or the near ambient presence of "Sign From the Hills," each track on this album features a dense musical demeanor setting off Brennan's vocals. With the curiosity and inquisitiveness of experimental music, though with the easy listenability often left behind with experimentation, *Whisper to the Wild Water* proves as musically adventurous as its vocal tracks are stunning.

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