

PERKY FIDDLE TUNES MAKE GOOD LIVE ACT

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09:00 - 06 March 2008

The marketing men have twigged that there's money in them thar hills so mountain music has become a staple of British popular music, for now, flourishing in foreign soil.

I come out in a rash every time Jools Holland introduces another pale and keening girl in plaits and a prairie skirt who hitches her horse to that wagon as convincingly as Ronan Keating sings soul.

So a band called Southern Tenant Folk Union, with a disc called Revivals, Rituals & Union Songs makes me nervy.

But, unlike many of those wan acts, this band has a great lead vocalist in Oliver Talkes, who brings to mind another fine singer from that London stable, Alan Tyler.

The album also features perky fiddle playing from Frances Vaux and some bright, keen mandolin sounds from Eamonn Flynn.

Some of the songs are choruses masquerading as songs, and I might not reach for this album instead of one by Walter Hyatt, Lyle Lovett or Joe Ely, but Revivals, Rituals & Union Songs has a robust personality and a foot-tapping style that, no doubt, makes them a pleasing live act.

Catch the band at the Chatterry, Swansea, next Thursday.

Contact 01792 473276 for tickets.

And on Wednesday, April 2, at Newport's , Hot Burrito Club @ Le Pub.

www.southerntenantfolkunion.com

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