

WEEKEND

Musical union of minds

John Murray on the much anticipated latest release by Southern Tenant Folk Union

SOUTHERN Tenant Folk Union are nothing like your 'normal' folk combo hence the anticipation on the release of their fifth album this week. In fact a series of launch parties all over the UK surround the birth of **Hello Cold Goodbye Sun** (*Johnny Rock*), ranging from Camden Town to Reading but beginning in their home town of Edinburgh. There are seven musicians on the project and if you add the guests it swells to 10 offering a union of minds as well as creative musicians in a form of prog-folk. So expect a Celtic feel with fiddle, banjo and bodhran on 'An Duil' but not so much bothy more Jethro Tull then hear harmony folk rock from 'Relic Of A Reasonable Mind' and imagine Crosby & Nash covering it. Then comes talent fiddle lady young Carrie Thomas on lead vocals on her own musical interpretation of Donald Ker's poem 'Days At The Seaside With Ice Cream' and again on her original 'Dark Passenger' eerie, threatening and sinister in its descriptions. Pat McGarvey's

'Crash' has already attracted comments from fans and critics in its originality, progressive and haunting like early Peter Gabriel but with a five-string banjo as lead instrument. Ever surprising and exploring new directions and who else has a song about Aberdour? With a similar cult following spanning generations and now decades The Blue Nile have 2CD collectors editions of their **Hats** and **A Walk Across The Rooftops** (EMI) master albums. Both hailed as genius in their day yet never capitalising on tours the reluctant trio remain an enigma. Five years separate these pieces (1984-89) but they are inseparable in style and ambience.

In addition to the remastered originals the second disc in each case features long lost vinyl B-sides, unreleased songs and alternative takes. Even today 'The Downtown Lights', 'Headlights On The Parade' and 'Stay' can send shivers with minimum jazz instrumentation under matchless vocals. 'Tinseltown In The Rain' in this long form still conjures dark wet evenings in Glasgow as a sinister city with Paul Buchanan's pleading and strained vocals like a castaway in the wind.



John Murray