

SIMON HOPPER

SINGER SONGWRITER

“Altered a little, but altered forever”*

“His songs are topical and intelligent. They don’t pull political punches... they try their damndest to seek a deeper context or reference point in a quest for understanding.”

hifi+ magazine

If you like your stories unflinching, raw and tender, then this uncompromising, sensitive songsmith is ripe for discovery. At turns provocative, poignant and funny, Simon’s songs pour out of an informed social conscience and a chequered storybook of personal experience.

Born in Dublin – the third of six children – to an Irish Catholic Family, Simon was brought to England in his first year and raised in the 1950’s and 60’s, the son of a Lancashire coal-miner. With several careers in fields as diverse as financial sales and dyslexia consultancy (“I had kids to feed”), Simon is now focused on his “tertiary career as a singer/songwriter/guitar player”. He says: “It’s what I’ve always most wanted to do – it’s time.”

While his most direct musical influences are American and Canadian singer-songwriters (Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, and the left-wing agitator, Steve Earl), Simon was drawn to British folk music while exploring the North-of-England clubs of the 1960s. There he saw folk stalwarts such as The Oldham Tinkers and Mike Harding (now presenter of Radio 2’s flagship folk programme) and these influences can be found in his writing – notably in *The Ballad of the Suffolk Five*, a song of respect for the victims of the Ipswich serial killer of 2006 and the first of his songs to receive **national radio airplay**.

Simon’s mastery of language as a beautifully pliable medium makes possible the delivery of dense and profound observations with precision and clarity. Asked about the scope of his subject matter, Simon replies: “Things that happen, things that matter.” The socio-political songs, for instance, jab at contemporary society’s political amnesia:

“And the weak feel powerless to act / Like a bystander on Kristellnacht...”

The love songs, too, are rarely unequivocal:

“And she makes me feel at ease / And she’s really keen to please /
But it’s funny, but it’s true / It all makes me think of you...”

* From Simon’s song *Jeffrey and Robert and I* on the album *A Land for the Many*.

“Tales of love and loss, often with a stinging twist”



Performance

In concert you get to grips with what radio presenter Sue Marchant perhaps meant when she said: “He’s an entertaining down-to-earth bloke that you wouldn’t mind sharing a beer with.” Relaxed, self-deprecating and witty on stage, his flat, Lancastrian vowels typify a warmth and directness. All this, together with an oftentimes Pythonesque inter-song delivery, make him an engaging performer. The writing and performance will remind you, perhaps more than anyone, of the artist Simon says he most relates to: Boo Hewerdine.

Simon has recorded five albums to date, latterly working with long-time collaborator guitarist Leigh Trowbridge and bassist/multi-instrumentalist Andee Price. Their three-part harmonies are a feature of live performances and provide a rich setting for Simon’s material.

Radio, live appearances:

BBC Radio West Midlands
BBC Radio Southampton
BBC Radio Cambridge
BBC Radio Wiltshire

Other Radio airplay

BBC Radio 3, World on 3
BBC Radio 4, as accompaniment to a radio drama

Discography:

Daffodils (2000),
Another Clue (2002)
What’s A Boy To Do? (2005)
A Land For The Many (2006)
The Less Blessed (2008)

More from the critics:

“The lyrics are razor-sharp and delivered with love and care.” Tim Carroll, FolkWords
“Poetry straight from the soul...” Graham Lees, Music Maker Magazine

All Simon’s recorded work is available through iTunes via the Myspace site. All CDs can be bought via the websites below. A Land for the Many and The Less Blessed can be ordered from all record shops or any online CD site. These albums are both distributed by Proper Distribution. **www.properdistribution.com**

www.simonhopper.co.uk

www.myspace.com/thesimonhopperband