

Folk Album of the Month – Mojo May 2001

Bill Jones – Panchpuran

Jones may inevitably be pigeonholed as another surfer on the wave that swept Eliza Carthy and Kate Rusby before us but, despite the predominance of traditional material, her reference points are very, very different. A relative latecomer to folk song, she's drawn not by bloodlines but the lyrical intensity of ballads and, fearless of the folk police, reinvents sacred cows like Tam Linn, William Taylor and A Stor Mo Chroi with new tunes and startling arrangements. Paradoxically, while she decorates the English tradition with jazz, classical, and – in the case of Blackleg Miner – a brass band, she delivers the story of her Indian aunt's immigration to Britain in a pure but affecting unaccompanied traditional style. For good measure, she tops it all off with a string quartet version of the old Carole King / Dusty Springfield standard Goin' Back. A great leap from *Turn to Me*.

Colin Irwin